ALTRUSA International | Leading to a Better Community® Portland, ME

January 2026 Altrusagram

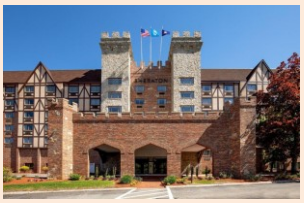
Upcoming Dates

Business Meeting
New Member Initiation
Wednesday, February 4
6:00 P.M.
Westbrook Community Center
426 Bridge St.
Westbrook, Me.

Ronald McDonald House
Sue's Supper
Tuesday, February 17

Program Meeting
Speaker : Katie Berthiaume from Maine Veterans Home
North Deering Tavern
Wednesday, February 18
6:00 P.M.

Business Meeting
Wednesday, March 4
6:00 P.M.
Westbrook Community Center
426 Bridge St.
Westbrook, Me.



District One Conference
Sheraton Nashua
May 1 - 3, 2026
11 Tara Blvd.
Nashua, N. H.

A Message From your Vice-President:

Dear Members & Friends,

I'm filling in while President Karen is under the weather. Wishing her a speedy recovery.

We started off the New Year with a bang! The ABC Reading continued in Portland schools, organizing and stickering continued at the warehouse, and we prepared our monthly meal at Ronald McDonald House.

As I write this, Calendar Raffle drawings are coming to a close. Thanks to Pam Lemieux who organizes and runs this signature fundraiser each year. Huge thanks to everyone who donated, secured donations, and/or sold entries. Almost $3700 in profit!

Due to the weather, both of our January meetings were held on Zoom with good attendance at both. We can pivot when we need to, and make it work for our Club! During our January program from the Southern Maine Agency on Aging, I was struck by their statement of Values. I believe most of them apply to Altrusans as well – Community-Centered, Belonging, Impact Driven, Team Oriented. I was also impressed with the variety of volunteer opportunities across their varied programs. If you missed the program, check them out at smaaa.org

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Cookie Walk at Books-A-Million in January. I know the staff there truly appreciate the treats. It's a lovely way to thank them for helping make these critical book drives successful. Thanks to the Service Committee for organizing this annual activity.

We have a lot to look forward to in the next few months! In February, we'll hear from the Scarborough Maine Veterans Homes Director of Recreational Therapy Katie Berthiaume to learn more about potential opportunities to start a new service project for Veterans. In April we'll celebrate our club's birthday party (97 years!), celebrate our 2026 Volunteer of the Year, and hold a membership drive. Wow!! May will see installation of officers for the new year. Through all of that we'll continue providing a monthly meal at Ronald McDonald House, finish up our ABC Reading Program for the 2025-2026 school year, and work on other projects, including a potential restaurant fundraiser.

Committee Chairs: Don't forget that the next fiscal year's budgets process starts in March. Committee requests will be due sometime in early March. The due date will be provided by the committee shortly. Start planning with your committees now!

Finally, I would like to congratulate Anita Chandler. She was selected to receive The Legacy Award from Maine Senior Games. MSG is celebrating their 40th anniversary in 2026.

Christine Johnson
Vice President 2024-2026

Altrusa is an international non-profit organization, making our communities better through leadership, partnership, and service.

Who We Are...

The Board
2025 - 2026

Club President: : Karen Valley
book1babe@gmail.com

Foundation President: Martha Gross
grossmartha01@gmail.com

Vice President: Christine Johnson
cejinmaine@gmail.com

Secretary: Fran Jensen
franjensen2911@gmail.com

Treasurer: Marie Pike
pikerino2@aol.com

Foundation Director: Cathy Paglio
rpaglio1@gmail.com

Club Director: Trish Maxim
campnaples@fairpoint.net

Immed. Past President: Wanda Pettersen
kettlecove_6@msn.com

Parliamentarian: Judith Reidman
reidmanjudith7@gmail.com

Committee Chairpersons
2025 - 2026

Communications Co-Chairs:
Christine Johnson cejinmaine@gmail.com
Erin May Deprez *erinmaydeprez@gmail.com*

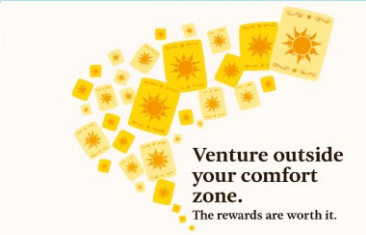
Finance Co-Chairs:
Marie Pike *pikerino2@aol.com*
Nicki Griffin *gardenhandsme@gmail.com*

Membership Co-Chairs:
Patricia Maxim *campnaples@fairpoint.net*
Debbie Lemieux *dalemieux33@gmail.com*

Service Co-Chairs:
Martha Gross *grossmartha01@gmail.com*
Cathy Paglio *rpaglio1@gmail.com*

Program and Event Co-Chairs:
Anita Chandler *achandler@maine.rr.com*
Gail Mazzone *mestormy70@gmail.com*

Altrusa District One News



January Governor's Message

Happy New Year!

We now have 2025 in the books and onto 2026. This has been such an exciting and busy year for me, and I am sure for many of you. From the fun of Spring Conference to the absolute beauty of Quebec during Convention to Fall Workshop and my many club visits. I enjoyed every minute and look forward to what next year will bring.

I hope the clubs enjoyed their holiday season, from the many posts on Facebook it certainly looked like it. Our January DSB will focus on the upcoming Spring Conference. The board and I are putting the finishing touches on the agenda. We hope everyone has made time in their schedules to attend.

We are at the point in the Altrusa year where new members pay ½ year dues. Please continue to use this as a selling point for potential new members. Many clubs have added to their membership and hopefully they will join us as well at Spring Conference.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your Governor. District One is the place to be for supporting our communities, building lifelong friendships and providing leadership opportunities.

In service,
Susan

District One Board Members from Left to Right:
Barbara Leavey - Director, Pat Jackowski - Parliamentarian, Rita Cote - Immed. Past Governor, Susan Porazzo - Governor, Wanda Pettersen - Governor Elect, Jodi Walencewicz - 1st Vice Governor, Diane O'Reilly - Treasurer, Not shown here - Debbie Lemieux - Director.

Altrusa International Foundation of Portland, Maine, Inc.
altrusaportland@gmail.com
PO Box 8834, Portland, ME 04104 USA
https://districtone.altrusa.org https://www.altrusaportland.org
https://www.altrusa.org

Altrusa Portland
Committee Mid Year Reports

Communications Committee
Mid-Year Report

Yearbook
- Updated Yearbook for 2025-2026
- Arranged for distribution of physical and/or digital copies to each member
- Posted Digital version of the Yearbook for easy member access
- Provided digital update to all members with addition of new members

Managed Club Collateral (in partnership with Other Committees)
- Maintained Inventory of Brochures
- Maintained Inventory of Business Cards
- Created flyers for Yard Sale, Empty Bowl and Membership Drive

Press Releases
- Maintained a list of email addresses for press releases
- Used various available public bulletin boards to share information about fundraisers and project
- Prepared press releases for Empty Bowl and Calendar Raffle fundraiser

Maintained Website & Managed Online Meeting options
- Updated current officer and club information
- Updated content regularly with newsletters, fundraisers, service projects, events, etc.
- Began Research and testing options for creating a calendar on the website
- Online meeting options – arranged for Zoom option to be available as needed

Maintain, Manage, Enhance and Grow our Social Media Presence
- Posted regularly – Collaborated with other committees for ongoing content.
- Commented on and shared relevant posts from District One, Altrusa International, other clubs, and other Districts.
- Posted about Service Projects, Fundraisers, Events, etc, on Facebook, Instagram and Next Door. Also created posts using Canva that are relevant to Altrusa and our mission, and recognized holidays.
- Tagged project partners as appropriate.
- Created Facebook Events for fundraisers to drive visibility

Other Communications Items
Created & Distributed the AltrusaGram monthly
Maintained & updated Service Hours Google Doc form and solicited member input.
Created a Year-at-a-Glance Club "Calendar" to identify activities, projects, fundraisers, administrative deadlines, etc, for the Altrusa year.

Communications Committee:
Co-Chairs: Christine Johnson, Erin Deprez

Altrusa Portland
Committee Mid Year Reports

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
MID-YEAR REPORT
(2025-2026)

The most important goal of the Membership Committee is to increase Membership in the Altrusa Club of Portland, Maine. We began this year with 29 members and 1 Emeritus. Following our November 19th Membership Drive at the North Deering Tavern, we added 2 new members, Ann Nappi & Kristina Kentigian, bringing our total to 31.

The District Board approved our application to classify Rae Clark-McGrath as Emeritus, bringing us to 2. But when Dr. Fran Dyro died on October 25, 2025, it dropped us back to 1.

An equally important goal is to RETAIN the members that we have. We thank every current member for your support in helping us to reach that goal. We do appreciate your continued commitment !!

As always, we keep attendance records at meetings and events; submit articles and pictures every month for our "Altrusagram"; and have a representative of our committee at each Board meeting.

Cathy Paglio, co-chair of the Service Committee, volunteered to send birthday/greeting cards to our celebrating or ailing members for this committee.
Our many thanks to her for doing it so well.

A sub-committee of the Membership Committee is ASTRA, which is now in its 10th year at Lake Region High School in Naples. Portland Altrusa supports ASTRA physically, with 1-3 members of this committee at every meeting & event - - as well as monetarily from its Foundation account, with a budgeted $250 for expenses; a $500 stipend to the LRHS faculty Advisor; And a $500 Scholarship to one of ASTRA's graduating Seniors at the end of the school year. ASTRA has about 40 active members this year, finally regaining the momentum lost during COVID.

Respectfully submitted by the Membership Committee of:
Fran Breton, Sarah Labonte, Marilyn MacDowell, Pam Szalajeski, Lee-Ann VanAtta
Debbie Lemieux, Co-Chair
Trish Maxim, Co-Chair

Altrusa Portland
Committee Mid Year Reports

From the Finance Committee

The finance committee, along with the efforts of all the members, have accomplished the following as of the mid-year report:

* Conducted a yard sale in June that raised a total of $1,237.
* Requested and received a $600 grant from the Altrusa International Foundation to fund the monthly Ronald McDonald meal.
* Attended the 100+ Women Who Care meeting.
* Organized the calendar raffle and appealed to members to solicit for donations and to initiate sales. We received $3,670 in sales and donations of $475 to completely cover the cash prizes to be awarded.
* Conducted a silent auction fundraiser at the holiday party. The club raised $462 for Wayside Food Programs. That with a $32 donation from a member means we donated $500 to Wayside. We also raised $40 for the club operating account from the 50/50 raffle.
* The treasurer filed the two required 990-Ns for the fiscal year ended 5/31/25 and they were accepted by IRS.
*The treasurer has sent tax acknowledgement/thank you letters to cash and noncash donors.

Also:
We are working on a restaurant night fundraiser with a local restaurant for sometime in the spring.

The next fiscal year's budgets process will start in March.

Thank you to all members for supporting the club and foundation fundraising efforts.

Respectfully,
Nicki Griffin (co-chair) Marie Pike (co-chair)
Fran Jensen Christine Johnson Pam Lemieux Judith Reidman

Altrusa Portland
Committee Mid Year Reports

Service Committee
Mid-Year report 2025-26

The Service Committee had their first meeting on August 26 2025. At that time, Members volunteered for various Service projects for the coming year.

August 16 – December 7: Books-A-Million sponsored a summer drive and a Holiday drive. Cathy Paglio contacted folks and many Altrusans signed up for times to greet patrons as well as pick up the many boxes of donated books.

Members of the club were generous and gave toys to Cathy's husband's Corvette Club for Christmas Toys for Tots.

September was busy: BOOKS BEHIND BARS, Arlene Hanson coordinated the collection, sorting and stickering of "gently used books" for the prisons and libraries.

Sue's Supper: With Ann Smith as coordinator and Altrusan guest chefs, meals were prepared and served to residents of the Ronald McDonald House on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

October : EMPTY BOWL. Altrusans signed up to for various tasks, Many crockpots, desserts, and bread were collected. And the facilities at the First Lutheran Church were readied to welcome our patrons. Kudos to All! Special thanks to Pam Lemieux for heading up the event as well as her brothers/families who helped with clean up.

November: We shared our love of reading with South Portland and Windham Kindergarten students, enjoying laughter together. After many years our ABC project is still exciting and appreciated by the teachers. We have read in 19 K-classes to date.

December: Book Requests. 10 requests for books have been filled for a total of 553 books to date.

Submitted by Co-chairs, Cathy Paglio and Martha Gross

Service Committee

1 Martha Gross, Foundation President and Co-chair
2 Cathy Paglio, Foundation Director and Co-chair
3 Marie Pike
4 Pam Lemieux
5 Ann Smith
6 Toni Parise
7 Wanda Pettersen
8 Arlene Hanson
9 Susan King
10 Katie Lamb
11 Nicki Griffin

Member News

From the Membership Committee

Initiation will be held for our 2 newest members, Ann Nappi and Kristina Kentigian, at our Feb. 4 Business Meeting.

Lets hope Mother Nature does not have other plans.

This will be held at the Westbrook Community Center, Oak Room, at 6:00 P.M.

Maine Senior Games announces the winner of their Legacy award

2026 is the 40th Anniversary of the Maine Senior Games. Anita Chandler is one of the founders who really helped the Maine Senior Games get its start back in 1986.

This from our Board Chair, Deb Smith to Anita, on behalf of the Maine Senior Games Board regarding her selection for the Legacy Award.

We are excited to present you with the Maine Senior Games Legacy Award at our Celebration of Athletes on Friday, May 29, 2026 at the Elks Club on Congress Street in Portland, Maine.

This award recognizes you, Anita Chandler, as the founding force behind the Maine Senior Games. Your passion and perseverance brought the idea to life four decades ago. Your leadership sparked a statewide tradition that continues to grow, fostering community, competition, and camaraderie for athletes ages 50 and over.
The Legacy Award is a lasting tribute to a remarkable individual whose contributions will forever be woven into the fabric of the Maine Senior Games.

Please join us on Friday, May, 29th for dinner, and our annual awards banquet.

MAINE SENIOR GAMES
2026 SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	EVENT	VENUE	CITY
5/6	10:00 AM	CANDLEPIN BOWLING	BIG 20 LANES	SCARBOROUGH
5/16	9:00 AM	ROAD RACES/POWER WALKS	YMCA	SANFORD
5/16	9:00 AM	BUOY TOSS	YMCA	SANFORD
5/29	4:30 PM	CELEBRATION OF ATHLETES	ELKS CLUB	PORTLAND
6/19 - 21	9:00 AM	PICKLEBALL	MAINE PINES	BRUNSWICK
6/27	10:00 AM	TRACK AND FIELD	ST. ISES	STANDISH
7/11	9:30 AM	CORNHOLE	YMCA	SANFORD
7/25 - 26	9:00 AM	TENNIS	MAINE PINES	BRUNSWICK
8/8	10:00 AM	TABLE TENNIS	TOWN HALL	BRIDGTON
8/9	9:00 AM	ARCHERY	LAKESIDE ARCHERY	N. YARMOUTH
8/23	9:00 AM	CYCLING	LANDING	BRUNSWICK
9/20	8:00 AM	BASKETBALL	SOFIVE SPORTS	SACO
9/20	11:00 AM	B. BALL SHOOTING SKILLS	SOFIVE SPORTS	SACO
9/27	10:00 AM	TEN PIN BOWLING	SOUTHGATE BOWL	HALLOWELL
TBA	TBA	GOLF AND GOLF SCRAMBLE	TBA	TBA
TBA	TBA	SWIMMING	TBA	TBA
TBA	TBA	POWERLIFTING	TBA	TBA

January Birthdays of the Month

Joanne Doherty
Sue Kohler
Nicki Griffin
Rae Clark-McGrath

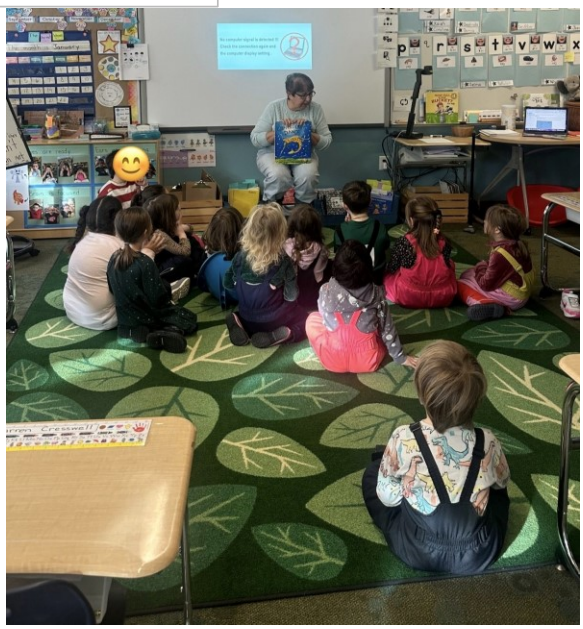
Happy Birthday!

Service Committee News

ABC

Altrusa Books for Children

Ocean Ave. Kindergarten classroom. Read to by Kristina Kentigian on Left and Nicki Griffin, Right.



Ann Smith reads to students at Rowe School.

Our Book warehouse at Waldron Way. Inventory is looking good.

Service Committee News

2026 Books-A-Million Cookie Walk

Altrusans Left to Right: Wanda Pettersen, Marilyn MacDowell, Marie Pike, Martha Gross(seated), Trish Maxim, Cathy Paglio, Ann Smith. Christine Johnson - taking photo

The BAM break room - the final destination for all the yummy cookies made in appreciation of the BAM bookdrives in 2025. From Left to Right: Marie Pike, Marilyn MacDowell, Cathy Paglio, Rick - BAM mgr, Fran Breton, Ben-Asst-Mgr Bam, Anita Chandler, Trish Maxim, Wanda Pettersen. Christine Johnson - taking photo.

Ann Smith and Marilyn MacDowell cooked and served American Chop Suey, a fancy "pull loaf" , and made coleslaw and served fancy apples.

Marilyn really enjoys this service project and plans to help me a lot!

Left - Ann Smith, Right - Marilyn McDowell

January 20
Ronald McDonald House
Sue's Supper

Ronald McDonald House Charities® Maine

Other Things

Don't forget to input your Service Hours.
Copy and paste this link into your browser:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfBA5kpTP2KnohBM77MIB7qwAm953glU10L8wCWanf3Qbrtqg/viewform

The International Association President wants us to enter literacy hours as a separate category.

from the Altrusagram editor

Many thanks in advance for all your efforts and your support in providing your input to Altrusa articles and photos.

Please email myself, Debbie, at dalemieux33@gmail.com with anything you consider newsworthy. My deadline for submissions is the Friday following the Program meeting.

Club Meeting Norms:

- ✓ Start and end on time
- ✓ Respect each other
- ✓ Accept differences
- ✓ No side Conversations, Cell phones silenced
- ✓ Provide a safe space to speak ones mind
- ✓ Abide by the democratic process
- ✓ Be engaged while present
- ✓ Assume others' good intentions
- ✓ Be open to the ideas of others
- ✓ No interruptions of speaker, speak one at a time

Thank you for continuing to fill up the green Altrusa **CLYNK** bags.
Pam Lemieux can give you as many bags with stickers as you ask for. Fill them with your returnables and Then:

1. drop them off at your local Hannaford's
2. drop the bags off at Pam Lemieux's house
3. or, bring to a meeting and give to Pam.

Mark your Calendars

District One Conference
Hosted by Past Governors
Sheraton Nashua
11 Tara Blvd
Nashua, N.H.
May 1-3, 2026