



December 2020 Altrusagram

Upcoming Dates



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Wednesday, Jan. 6
6:15 p.m.
Business meeting
via Zoom

Wednesday, Jan. 20
6:15 p.m.
Program Meeting
via Zoom

Friday, Jan. 22
items due to newsletter
editor

Wednesday, Feb. 3
6:15 p.m.
Business meeting
via Zoom

Wednesday, Feb. 17
6:15 p.m.
Program Meeting
via Zoom

*Board meetings will be
called as necessary.*

from the President:

The signs are everywhere around us. We are seeing beautifully decorated and colorfully lit Christmas trees and street lights. Wreaths are hanging on doors and windows. Fedex, UPS and USPS delivery truck drivers have worked feverishly to get those packages delivered. This Season, a season of Giving and HOPE, is NOT giving in to COVID. HOPE is looming large as families and friends connect and share season cheer in different, creative and loving ways.



By the time you read this letter, there will have been a group of Altrusan Sisters, caroling and spreading their cheer and HOPE to other Altrusan Sisters that have been quarantining.

We gathered online to celebrate each other at our Zoom Christmas Party. Our Social Committee, hosted a program of fun games, wrapped up by sharing many personal Holiday memories. We enjoyed a special rendition of Silent Night, sung in Polish by our own Fran Dyro.

Signs of Giving and Hope are evident as our club has again been blessed with another very successful BAM bookdrive. Their continued support of our organization is a sign of HOPE and continuity. Many of our members were seen, distanced and masked, at Books-A-Million in South Portland on Saturday mornings. Our presence there, at last count, resulted in 50 boxes of books.

ASTRA students have been remotely gathering online to discuss plans for spring service. Gardening and delivering dinners to Veteran's Center continue to be realistic goals. While, reading to Kindergarten classes is still a HOPE for the Spring, it may be possible to deliver books in a safe way, as an alternative.

This year's Calendar Raffle sales are promising. You have all been doing a great job selling and promoting our biggest fundraiser. Hooray for you!

Merry Christmas to each of you. Thank you for your gift of HOPE to the community, which is your dedicated service. Please know that every little thing you do is like delivering a hug to those in need. HUGS to each and every one of you.

Debbie



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

Who We Are

The 2020 - 2021 Board

President: : Debbie Lemieux
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Vice President: Wanda Pettersen
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Secretary: Nicki Griffin
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Director: Fran Breton
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Director: Patricia Maxim
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Immed. Past President: Anita Chandler
achandler@maine.rr.com

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Committee Chairpersons 2020 - 2021

Communications: Co-Chairs:
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Karen Valley book1babe@gmail.com

Finance: Co-Chairs:
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Membership:
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Patricia Maxim campnaples@fairpoint.net

Service: Co-Chairs:
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Martha Gross sfeps2005@yahoo.com

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Roberta Morrill rjdutton36@aol.com
Pam Szalajeski pam.szal@maine.rr.com



Altrusans bring Joy

On a wintry December night six Altrusans went a-caroling to bring cheer to Altrusan sisters!

The carolers included Anita Chandler, Wanda Pettersen, Christine Johnson, Ann Smith, Debbie Lemieux and Susan King.

They visited Marcia Marley, Martha Donahue, Jane Coolidge, Pam Lemieux and Pam Szalajeski.

They sang Jingle Bells, Rudolph, Silent Night, Joy to the World, and We Wish You a Merry Christmas.

Holiday Cheer to All!



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Committee News

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee met on Monday night on December 15, 2020 at 6PM on Zoom. Five members were present. Issues discussed included Venmo, PayPal, website, donation buttons, Raffle Calendar promotion, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, End of Book Drive, and a full review of the committee's goals and actions for 2020-2021. A complete report will be provided for the next business meeting. Please continue to push out emails for the final days of Raffle. And share on Facebook, etc. Call your friends in person if you can, as we miss the human connection this year due to Covid-19. Let us know how we are doing! Email is a good way to reach Co-chairs Christine and Karen for promotional feedback, and Marie for the Altrusagram. Happy Holidays!!!

-- Karen V

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Wow! -- 24 of our 32 members attended our virtual holiday party via ZOOM. Thank you to the Social Committee for an excellent selection of activities!

Normally at least 2-3 of the missing 8 members would have been there, but a variety of necessary circumstances this year kept them away. We need to offer to help the other absentees to learn the 'ropes' of ZOOM. It has developed into a fun way to connect and stay in touch -- with less time commitment than traveling to meetings; no worries about driving at night; and snow storms won't cancel our meetings.

Any volunteers to check in with those members to see if it is a lack of equipment or lack of knowledge how to use it that keeps them away?

-- Trish M



FINANCE COMMITTEE

For its January Program the committee is going to hold a virtual BINGO game for all of you who are "Gamblers" and want to participate in taking a chance at winning HALF OF THE POT of the total receipts. The game will be played much like the one held at Workshop, for those who attended, with Marie being the BINGO Caller. She did a wonderful job and it was great fun, so we would like to offer it to all of you. We can certainly use some entertainment during these stressful times.

Here is how you can get your BINGO cards: The first card will be \$10.00 and any subsequent card is \$5.00. Buy as many as you think you can play, while keeping up with Marie's calling 😊 The more the better 😊

Send your check to our Treasurer, Nadeen Daniels, 53 Northwood Dr. Portland, ME 04103, or pay through our PayPal account. Make sure that you note BINGO on the check, or in your PayPal note. Payment should be received two days prior to our Program Meeting, January 20th, so that Nadeen can notify Marie of how many Bingo Cards to send via e-mail to the players.

Good Luck and can't wait to see you all NEXT YEAR!
-- Wanda P and Fran J

CHRISTMAS BOOKS GIVEAWAY

About 100 Christmas-themed books donated by the BAM customers were given away this year.

Susan King and Anita Chandler delivered books to members' homes for wrapping. The wrapped books were then collected and donated to: the Riverton Boys and Girls club, the Sagamore Boys and Girls club, and Portland Housing Authority. The Housing Authority then distributed the books to the residents of the Kennedy Park, Riverton and Sagamore Village communities.

-- Anita C



Altrusans Build Hope

all about ASTRA



Ability
Service
Training
Responsibility
Achievement

For me to answer Governor Linda's question, "How does ASTRA stay abreast of Altrusa activities and vice versa?" I first need to provide a brief history of the 4 1/2 year old Lake Region High School ASTRA club. It was founded by Katie Klein, a member of the Portland Altrusa club for 4 years at that time, who had recently become the Librarian at LRHS in Naples, Maine. Her 2nd year on the job she suggested to Altrusa that she start an ASTRA club there. Even though the high school was not in the Greater Portland area, Altrusa was enthusiastic to go ahead with it. (LRHS is in Naples, Maine about 1/2 way between Portland & North Conway, NH - - nearly 40 miles and 1 hour from Portland.) Katie got approval from the Superintendent of schools in the Fall of 2016 & recruited the first members. ASTRA was popular with the students and grew fast. It was Chartered by Intn'l on February 1, 2017. The Portland Altrusa club conducted the evening Charter ceremony at the high school on May 18, 2017. Communications between Altrusa & ASTRA were easy, because Katie was both the 'Advisor to ASTRA' and the 'Liaison to Altrusa'. I live in Naples, Maine so I had been attending the weekly ASTRA meetings and assisting Katie in any way I could.

At the end of the 2nd school year of ASTRA, Katie gave her notice and relocated to a similar position in Plymouth, Mass. Fortunately she recruited a new, young English & Humanities teacher to be the ASTRA Advisor for the next year. We were fortunate to get Carinne Fournier, whom the students love, as the new Advisor; but she is not an Altrusan. She attended our annual membership drive that October of 2018 and learned about Altrusa, but lived too far away to consider membership. Thus, I have become the 'Liaison to ASTRA' for Portland Altrusa. I continue to attend all of the ASTRA meetings and activities. Besides reporting on ASTRA's activities at our Business meetings, I submit an article and pictures each month to Portland's "Altrusagram", which is full of Altrusa's activities and is electronically distributed to our members and others, including Advisor Carinne.

All students & staff at LRHS have an email account in their first.lastname@lakeregionschools.org. Carinne is in constant contact with all ASTRA members, including me,

through that means of communication. In addition to that, Carinne & I are back and forth through private emails and texting frequently. I forward to Carinne everything that I receive from International & District regarding ASTRA. Our deadlines for reports, service project entries, scholarship applications, etc. are demanding of an already very busy young lady. My only task is to keep the deadlines in the forefront; although I have assisted with the Altrusa specifics required on the cover page to the "ASTRA Service Project".

Portland Altrusa has supported ASTRA in many ways. In addition to putting on the lovely Charter ceremony at the high school, they have paid for ASTRA T-shirts 3 years in a row. The 2 years that ASTRA spent a full day at the 'Habitat For Humanity' build site in Scarborough, Altrusa brought the lunch and joined us for the hour. Altrusa generously shares their books from Books-A-Million so that ASTRA can extend the 'ABC Program' to the Elementary schools in our S.A.D.61. Altrusa has also awarded a \$500 scholarship to a graduating Senior ASTRA student each year. And because S.A.D.61 has a policy of paying stipends only to athletic coaches, Portland Altrusa has presented Carinne Fournier with a \$250 thank you at the end of each of her 2 years as Advisor.

Last December 16, 2019 Carinne became a new mother. She worked until the baby was born and took a leave of absence until the beginning of March. She had just returned when schools closed due to COVID-19. While she was out, I continued to attend the weekly meetings, run by the ASTRA President. ASTRA activities were light, but they did manage to submit their entry for the "ASTRA Service Project" award.

This year, of course, is very different. Carinne reports that it has been a little frustrating, to say the least, to try to get students to participate virtually in clubs, (as well as in class) this year. She isn't able to meet many ASTRA members in the hallway now, because the school has limited the contact between teachers & students whom they don't have in class (to avoid needing to have everyone quarantine should there be a positive case). She is trying to encourage participation through email, but students seem overwhelmed with the number of emails they are receiving daily. It's also a struggle to get them to attend virtual meetings. Carinne realizes that some of the biggest draws of ASTRA in the past were the opportunity to see their friends during the school day and to work with one another on various community service projects. The virtual meetings and socially distanced activities don't have the same pull. With the existing COVID-19 guidelines, it is difficult to offer them more.

- - Trish M

Other Business

CLYNK MONEY

Please continue to fill up the green Altrusa CLYNK bags. Here's how to dispose:

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

Keep those cans and bottles coming!



amazon

smile

AMAZON SMILE MONEY

If you are shopping on-line consider using Amazon Smile, with Altrusa International Foundation of Portland, Maine as your choice of nonprofit. For instructions see the November 2020 Altrusagram or contact the Finance Committee. The 0.5% of sales adds up if we all participate!

Invite your friends to do the same.



Please send all newsletter items to Marie at pikerino2@aol.com. The deadline is the Friday after the program meeting.

SERVICE HOURS

The Altrusa Year is half over!

Don't forget to input your Service Hours. The Google Docs online Service form captures all that you input for your monthly service activity. This can be used to tally the hours that get submitted to International. It is a very important function.

Do it now before you forget all the good work you've done!

District One Training Opportunity

Thursday, January 14, 2021 @ 6 pm
Communications

Join Debbie Lemieux, Cathy Baybutt and Denise Doyon to discuss Newsletter, Website, Publicity and Social Media on Zoom.

Log-in info is available in the most recent DSB, page 14 (issued 12/22/20). If you did not get this DSB please let Marie Pike know.



The Portland Altrusans extend a huge thank you to everyone at Books-A-Million and their customers for once again partnering with us in our efforts to promote literacy and get books into the community.

As they have in past years, the management at BAM chose us to be the recipient of the holiday book drive. Thanks to the efforts of the staff at BAM and their generous customers we will be well stocked for the coming year. Exact figures will be published later.

In addition to our own service projects, we partner with other organizations who request books at our www.AltrusaPortlandgivesbooks.org website. Be sure to share this site if you know of a nonprofit organization that needs books.

THANK YOU!

January Birthdays



Joanne Doherty
Roberta Morrill
Nicki Griffin
Rae Clark-McGrath

Mark your calendar for these Future District & International Events

District One Conference - April 24 - 25 in Freeport - we host!

New date & location: International Convention July 28-31 in Charlotte, NC



some Member News and Views

This month's question: What is either the most fun or the worst time you ever had celebrating New Year's Eve?

As children my brothers and I woke up early on New Years Day to see what goodies our father brought home from the gig he played during the night. We had hats, noisemakers, and occasional candy. When we grew older we attended some sedate parties including sitting up all night to put together jigsaw puzzles with the nextdoor neighbors. Now we try to stay awake for supper.

Fran D

The most New Year's Eve fun I ever had was when I was working a resort dining room in Arizona and some of us waitstaff ending up dancing, drinking, and partying with the guests between delivering the meals. The fun was doing something we wouldn't normally dream of doing!

Marie P



I have never celebrated New Year's except by going to bed BEFORE the ball dropped! I am a regular party pooper!

Ann S

I've done it all, getting all gussied up and going out to a hotel for dinner, dancing and celebrating in a group, gone to friends houses who opened their homes to big parties, but what I always liked best was simply staying home with my boys and watching the ball drop in Times Square!

Gerry D

A group of my high school classmates and friends have spent New Years together for many years. After a social hour, we'd enjoy a pot luck dinner, followed by conversation, playing trivia games, coffee and dessert while watching the Ball descend in Times Square. One year someone brought a cake she had ordered in Baton Rouge that had a tiny little doll in the cake 🍪 and who ever had the piece of cake with the doll would have good luck! That was extra fun and exciting.

Roberta M

Best Wishes to All for a Happy, Healthy 2021

Even though we did not have the Altrusa Party at my house, I put up my lighted houses.

Judith R

