



August 2025 Altrusagram

Upcoming Dates



Business Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 3

6:00 P.M.

Oak Room

Westbrook Community Center

426 Bridge St.
Westbrook, Me.

Ronald McDonald House

Sue's Supper

Tuesday, September 16

Program Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 17

6:00 P.M.

Oak Room

Westbrook Community Center

426 Bridge St.
Westbrook, Me.

District One Workshop

Saturday, November 8

UConn

352 Mansfield Road
Storrs, Ct.

Program Meeting

Membership Drive

Wednesday, November 19

6:00 P.M.

Location TBD

A Message From your President:



Greetings, fellow Portland Altrusans and friends! We've had a busy Summer with our very successful July/August Book Drive at Books-A-Million (BAM). We passed out a lot of business cards and brochures while chatting with potential donors. We met some interesting people. Thank you to everyone (members, prospects, donors and BAM staff) who participated in making this event a success.

August has been extremely busy with Committees meeting to ready us for a fun exciting year. I personally attended each of these meetings in person or with Zoom. Thank you to all who participated and are continuing to work hard to bring their plans to completion.

We had fun meeting up with Cathy Paglio and her husband at Payson Park where we brought toys to fill his Corvette that will be donated to "Toys for Tots" on Labor Day Weekend. Our Board met August 20th and reviewed the Strategic Plan and our policies and procedures. Drafts of proposed changes will be shared with members soon.

Our next business meeting is Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at the Westbrook Community Center in the Oak Room. We will have a full agenda with a lot of information sharing. Our first Program Meeting is September 17th at WCC in the Oak Room. Hope to see you there. Our meetings are open to guests, friends and interested individuals who would like to learn more about Altrusa.

Someone once said, "A comfort zone is a beautiful place, but nothing ever grows there." We all love to volunteer otherwise we wouldn't be Altrusans. When new opportunities arise, are we open to trying something new to us? Or are we stuck in the same place repeatedly, not stepping out of our comfort zones. "The edge of your comfort zone is where you can see new horizons." – Unknown - So, venture out and offer to help in an area that is new to you. See where it might lead you.

I'm forever grateful to you, my friends in Altrusa and beyond. I appreciate the opportunity to lead even when I think it's more than I can do. I say yes even when it takes me out of my comfort zone. Am I always successful? No. But the success comes from having the new experience and having grown from it. Is it scary? Sometimes, yes. But we're never alone. Is it worth it? Yes! It's taken me to places doing things that have made my life more interesting and challenging.

This year, I hope we are all stepping outside of our comfort zones and trying new experiences. If you've never been to a District One Fall Workshop, I hope you will attend this November 8th in Hartford Connecticut at UConn. It's going to be a single day of learning, sharing and having fun! Some of us will be staying overnight Friday night, which is another opportunity to network and have fun. Carpooling is highly recommended. Read the September District Services Bulletin (DSB) for registration information.

"Growing Better Together with Gratitude"

Karen Valley



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 News

A Special note of Thanks!

Ann Babbitt has produced the Yearbook for as far back as many of us can recall. She endured many rounds of edits and countless hours gathering new data, updates while making sure the end product was accurate and timely. We appreciate you, Ann.

THANK YOU

Left to Right: Christine Johnson, Marie Pike, Wanda Pettersen and Debbie Lemieux. Enjoying the sights of Quebec City with the Hotel Frontenac in the background.



International Convention attendees from District One posing together with our District One T-Shirts. Quebec City club, a part of District One hosted this Biennium convention and did a fabulous job.



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Service Committee News

BOOKS BEHIND BARS

If you have been sorting books out at home and have some gently used books for our project, Books Behind Bars, Please call Martha Gross this weekend for pickup!

You may also bring them to our first Business meeting on September 3, 2025 at Westbrook Community Center. 6:00pm.

This is an example list of acceptable type books needed:

- Self help Books
- How to Draw
- Mysteries
- Spanish or French Books
- Spanish Dictionary

Thank you for your support with this Service Project

Martha Gross
Foundation President
& Service Committee Chair
Cathy Paglio
Foundation Director

*Next Sue's Supper
to be held
Sept 16
Contact Ann Smith FMI*



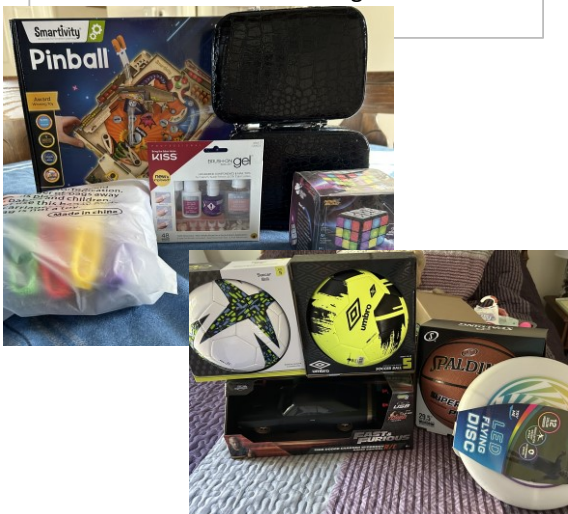
Ronald McDonald
House Charities
Maine



From Left to Right: Nicki Griffin, Martha Gross, The Vette, Karen Valley, Cathy Paglio and Susan F. King.

Toys for Tots collection at Payson Park

On August 17th, some Altrusans attended the "Fill the Corvette" event at Payson Park. Cathy Paglio and her Husband were onsite with their Vette for the Filling.



President Karen Valley found her perfect fit.



Books-A-Million sponsored our summer book drive again over the past several weeks.

It was very successful for our ABC Program which will begin in September. Warm thanks to the membership for filling the Saturday and Sunday slots.

Next on our agenda, of course, is labeling and shelving and bagging some books for South Portland Kindergarten classes which will occur toward the latter part of September.

We have about 30 boxes to sort. Contact Martha Gross at grossmartha01@gmail.com FMI about sorting and sticking at the warehouse.



Lee-Ann VanAtta and Debbie Lemieux greeting customers at BAM on a fine Saturday in August.

Committee News

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee met this summer to talk about goals for the new year. We have developed some ambitious action plans, and all members can help.



Communication is one of the keys to a successful organization. This includes communication from leadership to members but also communication between committees and among members. As we start off the new Altrusa service year, let's make Communication a watchword for our club. The Communications Committee is ready to help!

Committee Chairs, as your committees meet and make decisions, ***please communicate those decisions to the Communications Committee.*** This gives us a chance to help develop messaging, design flyers, post on social media, develop press releases, share on community bulletin boards, etc, as needed. If you have something planned that requires club member support or input, either send the information to the whole club yourself, or ask Karen to send it out on your behalf. Have pictures from an event, project or fundraiser? Share with the Communications Committee so we can continue to spread the word about our good work and raise our profile in the community.

When it comes to Facebook or Instagram, you can post content yourself. ***Please remember to tag @AltrusaPortland.*** This allows our Facebook account to see your post so we can comment on it. This increases the reach of people that see us.

First up for the new year are Yearbook updates. We are working through a major change for 2025-2026. Please send any personal contact updates to both Trish Maxim at campnaples@fairpoint.net and Debbie Lemieux at dalemieux33@gmail.com. At our May 13 special meeting during which we approved the budget, we voted that all members would receive a digital copy of the Yearbook in PDF. Any member who wants a **PRINTED** copy of the Yearbook will pay a \$15 fee for it. To make sure we print enough copies, **IF** you want a printed copy, **please email Trish and Debbie no later than our September 17 meeting.** If you don't reply, we will assume that you do not want a printed copy. Thanks for your understanding and support as we make this change.

The Communications Committee looks forward to supporting Club activities during the 2025-2026 Altrusa year.

Membership Committee

Membership Drive is an on-going effort throughout the year. However, our November program meeting is an official membership drive meeting. This year it falls on Wednesday, November 19. Stay tuned for announcement regarding it's location and speakers.

Each of us has a vested interest in growing our club. Our services being called for are increasing and so should our depth of members. New members bring new energy, new ideas, new contacts for reaching the most in-need in our communities. New members bring new friendships and fellowships.

It is not too soon to start soliciting for prizes for our annual Calendar Raffle.



Committee News

More from the Membership Committee:

Recently the Board approved the recommendation for membership on Lee-Ann VanAtta and Susan Kohler. They each attended our last business before summer break and in addition they each attended a BAM bookdrive slot. They are enthusiastic, energetic, giving souls and ready to jump in, they will be great additions to our team.

Here is Lee-Ann's Bio:

My name is Lee-Ann VanAtta and I live in Standish, Maine. My first interaction with Altrusa was when the Lake Region High School ASTRA Club assisted with a holiday shopping day for the students at Stevens Brook Elementary School in Bridgton, Maine. They were great with the students and I learned about Altrusa at that time.

As a first grade teacher, my students were recipients of the February Vacation Activity Bags that the LRHS students made for everyone. It seemed like Altrusa and ASTRA were groups that were doing great things for our community! I was interested in joining this organization because I retired from teaching elementary school students for thirty-nine years and wanted to continue to do good work and provide service for others.

Thank you very much for allowing me to join Altrusa of Portland, Maine. I am looking forward to providing service to others in our local and extended community in Maine.



Here is Susan's Bio:

Hello! I'm Sue Kohler, and I'm excited to be working with all of you at Altrusa! I've called Standish home for the past 30 years, where I raised two wonderful children with my husband. In the last five years, we've celebrated both of their marriages and welcomed four beautiful grandchildren, who truly light up my life.



After retiring from a fulfilling 30-year career at a local utility, I'm eager to find ways to give back to my community. For many years, I volunteered in a partnership between my workplace and Jack Elementary in Portland, where I spent time each week reading to young children. Witnessing the joy and wonder in their eyes as they explored the magical world of books was incredibly rewarding.

Now, in retirement, I'm looking for more opportunities to support our community, and I believe Altrusa is the perfect fit. I can't wait to get started!

Membership Development Workshop

While at International Convention, I, Debbie Lemieux, Christine Johnson and Wanda Pettersen split up and attended 3 workshops each.

I attended a Membership development session presented by Nancy Norris and other members of the International Membership development team. **"Membership is Not a cost, it's an investment"**. The most important aspect of membership development is to **make current members feel connected, valued, supported and included. They are our lifeblood.**

Key take-aways:

1. **Set Goals.** International is asking each member to bring in one new member. At the club level, we (Madame President 😊) should set our goals high, think BIG.
2. **Review and Streamline the process.** Invite potential members to assist in service projects. create a meeting schedule that will be suitable for young, working folks. Speakers that will interest a wide audience.
3. **Maintain a contacts list. Plant the Seed.** Increase your reach of potential members by inviting other non-profits to assist in your service projects and invite them to meetings with speakers. Ask other non-profits how you can help them.

I will be sure to have laminated copies of this poster available for handout at Business meeting. **Spread the word.**

BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM

ALTRUSA International Portland, ME

CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

ASTRA LEADERS IN SERVICE

Helping a little, gives a lot.

What are some of the many ways Altrusans serve our community?

- Ronald McDonald House meals
- A B C - bringing books to Kindergartners
- Project FEED with our Empty Bowl
- Awarding scholarships to students
- ASTRA program at Lake Region H.S.
- Annual Volunteer of the Year Award

INFORMATION

- @AltrusaPortland
- altrusaportland@gmail.com
- www.altrusaportland.org

CONTACT US FMI ABOUT ATTENDING OUR NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP DRIVE MEETING

International Convention highlights

Highlights of the 59th Altrusa International Convention
Submitted by Christine Johnson



Debbie Lemieux, Wanda Pettersen and Christine Johnson attending their First Timers Workshop.

Altrusa Portland receives 2nd place Mamie L. Bass award for their entry of Sue's Supper. Seen here with Immediate Past International president, Linda Smith, L to R, Christine Johnson, Wanda Pettersen, Scott Tice.



Thank you to the club for giving me the opportunity to represent you as a delegate at the recent Altrusa International Convention in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. It was a busy few days with meetings, workshops, receptions, keynote speakers, voting, banquets, awards, fellowship, entertainment, and so much more!!

Each of your delegates and alternates attended different workshops. Collectively we learned a lot and made new friends and connections. Here are some things I took away from this experience.

Workshop Engage & Inspire: Communicating with the Community Online. During this session, I learned that LinkedIn can be a powerful tool for both educating our community about Altrusa and recruiting new members. Especially young professionals who are looking for opportunities to volunteer. If you have a LinkedIn profile, use that to share information about Altrusa. If you don't have a profile, consider setting one up, even if you are retired! Businesses/Nonprofits can set up pages too, and the Communications Committee is working through the steps required to make that happen. We'll let you know if we make it happen.

Another workshop was *One World: Collaborating in International Service.* For some clubs, it can be hard to initiate a project, but they offered some great ideas to get us started. The key takeaway from this session for me was the idea of finding a partner in the community. Is a local church, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Lion's Club, or other non-profit already doing work in another country that we might help with? Also, making connections with a local organization with a focus on serving recent immigrants can lead to opportunities. Identify non-profits working in areas of interest to your club or those doing easy-to-support projects. For example, a "pill bottle project" was mentioned. There is not a single non-profit doing this. There are several local organizations around the country working on keeping plastic out of our landfills and repurposing clean prescription bottles needed for reuse in other countries.

Recruiting and Retaining Great Members was a particularly powerful workshop with a lot of excellent content. That will make a great topic for discussion at one of our business meetings this fall!!

Finally, I want to offer a huge thanks to Wanda for driving the 5+ hours up and back. It was truly a pleasure to sit back, relax, and enjoy the "flight".

International Convention highlights



Adventure to Quebec City Altrusa International Convention July 22 - July 27

Debbie, Christine, and I traveled together to Quebec, not a bad 5 hr. drive. I was excited to connect with fellow Altrusans whom I have not seen in a while and especially looking forward to meeting other District Governor Elects.

The convention offered numerous workshops and networking sessions. I attended sessions on leadership development, Foundation grant submissions / fundraising, and healthy aging. A couple of my favorites were The Governor-Elect Workshop: and Be part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Meeting & Collaborating with other Governor Elects will be an incredible resource, and the UN presentation confirmed the importance of Altrusa's global reach.

As Altrusans, we not only work and serve our communities, but we also know how to play. "Rock our Tartans event" brought out family tartans, state & club tartans from as far away as New Zealand, Texas and many other locations. A delightful skit whose characters brought us back to the way people lived in New France in the 17th century; and ending with Altrusans dancing to the period music.

Convention is a fantastic way to meet other Altrusans from the United States and around the world.

Submitted by,
Wanda

Altrusa District One delegates and alternates at Altrusa International convention 2025. Missing in Picture is Wanda Pettersen and taking photo is Linda Ring.



Club 52 Charter Member Wanda Pettersen being pinned by International Foundation rep, Marie Pike, as District One Governor, Susan Porazzo looks on.



Susan Porazzo leading the charge for the introduction of the New International President's Biennium Theme.



Wanda made fast friends with Chanda from a club in Wisconsin. She gave her our District pin. I guess now they are **pin**-pals.



And this is what attending Altrusa convention, conferences and workshops is ALL about. Making Forever connections with like-minded souls from all over the country and world.



More International Convention highlights

Friday night at the Convention, was Tartan Night. And it was such a huge success. Thanks to the Quebec City club for hosting International Convention.

There was entertainment from Choeur des Filles du Roy, which is an a cappella choir of women (some in the Quebec City Club). They performed

'A la Rencontre des Filles du Roy translated "Meeting the King's Daughters". They were dressed in the time period of 1663 - 1673 and each portrayed a story of a woman's desire to travel across the ocean to start a new life in New France.

Photo taken below of Les Filles du Roy with members of the Quebec City Club.



Adventure to Quebec City Altrusa International Convention July 22 - July 27 Rocking the Tartan



Les Choeur des Filles du Roy



Members of the Central Ct. club sporting their states Tartan. Left to Right:

Ralph and Linda Ring, Pat and Charlie Jackowski, Hilda Schmidt and hubby.



Ann Marie Snyder and Wanda Pettersen show their Tartan pride.



Altrusans from Ohio. Great Tartan tights.



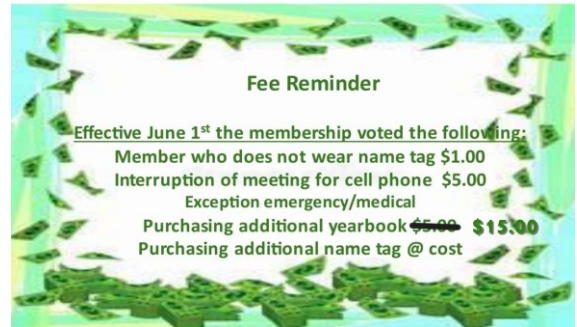
Tartan shoes.

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/1FAIpQLSfBA5kpTP2KnohBM77MIB7qwAm953gIU10L8wCWanf3Qbrtqg/viewform>

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



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

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.

-- Debbie L.



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
Upcoming District events

