



## September 2025 Altrusagram



### Upcoming Dates

**Business Meeting**  
Wednesday, Oct. 1  
6:00 P.M.  
Oak Room

**Westbrook Community Center**  
426 Bridge St.  
Westbrook, Me.

**Cricket Comforts Pillowcase Dash**  
Saturday, October 11  
Old Robie School  
668 Gray Road  
Gorham, Me.

**Program Meeting**  
Wednesday, Oct. 15  
6:00 P.M.  
North Deering Tavern  
1349 Washington Ave.  
Portland, Me.

**Ronald McDonald House**  
Sue's Supper  
Tuesday, October 21

**Empty Bowl Supper**  
Saturday, October 25  
5 - 7 P.M.  
First Lutheran Church  
132 Auburn Street  
Portland, 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:



My fellow Altrusans and Friends: Fall is finally here, my favorite time of year!

Our next business meeting is Wednesday October 1, 2025, at the Westbrook Community Center (WCC), Westbrook Maine at 6PM. This is an important meeting for two reasons. First, we're initiating the Portland Club's two new members, Sue Kohler and Lee-Ann VanAtta, bringing our membership back to 29. And Second, we'll be voting on policy and procedure changes during the meeting.

We will hear from our Service Committee about our upcoming Empty Bowl Fundraiser, which is October 25, 2025, at the First Lutheran Church, 132 Auburn St in Portland, ME. Altrusans make and serve awesome soups and stews and provide drinks and desserts. This event benefits Project FEED, an emergency food depot located at Woodfords Church in Portland, ME. We'll be selling our 2026 Raffle Calendars there, too.

I hope many of you will be able to attend the October Program Meeting on October 15, 2025, at 6PM at the North Deering Tavern on Washington Ave in Portland. It's a fun night to socialize and hear a speaker.

Volunteering is so rewarding! In these turbulent times it brings happiness to the givers and the receivers. If you're not an Altrusan and you're reading this newsletter, think about coming to a meeting or two and learning more about who we are and what we do and why. Maybe there is room in your life to become an Altrusan, too. All are welcome.

Thank you to Ann Smith and her volunteers who cook for the families at the Ronald McDonald House every month. Also, thank you to Arlene Hanson who headed up the "Books Behind Bars" effort this month and to all who assisted in some way.

Thank you, Portland Altrusans, for my birthday card this month. This month has been a mixture of sad and happy times for me. However, my favorite was going apple picking with my great granddaughters at Randall's Orchards in Standish on my birthday. The skies were blue, the weather was warm, and the kids were adorable! Randalls offers apples, cider donuts and pizza there. Better than a birthday cake!

Enjoy reading this Altrusagram!

"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](mailto:book1babe@gmail.com)

Foundation President: Martha Gross  
[grossmartha01@gmail.com](mailto:grossmartha01@gmail.com)

Vice President: Christine Johnson  
[cejinmaine@gmail.com](mailto:cejinmaine@gmail.com)

Secretary: Fran Jensen  
[franjensen2911@gmail.com](mailto:franjensen2911@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Marie Pike  
[pikerino2@aol.com](mailto:pikerino2@aol.com)

Foundation Director: Cathy Paglio  
[rpaglio1@gmail.com](mailto:rpaglio1@gmail.com)

Club Director: Trish Maxim  
[campnaples@fairpoint.net](mailto:campnaples@fairpoint.net)

Immed. Past President: Wanda Pettersen  
[kettlecove\\_6@msn.com](mailto:kettlecove_6@msn.com)

Parliamentarian: Judith Reidman  
[reidmanjudith7@gmail.com](mailto:reidmanjudith7@gmail.com)

## Committee Chairpersons 2025 - 2026

Communications Co-Chairs:  
Christine Johnson [cejinmaine@gmail.com](mailto:cejinmaine@gmail.com)  
Erin May Deprez [erinmaydeprez@gmail.com](mailto:erinmaydeprez@gmail.com)

Finance Co-Chairs:  
Marie Pike [pikerino2@aol.com](mailto:pikerino2@aol.com)  
Nicki Griffin [gardenhandsme@gmail.com](mailto:gardenhandsme@gmail.com)

Membership Co-Chairs:  
Patricia Maxim [campnaples@fairpoint.net](mailto:campnaples@fairpoint.net)  
Debbie Lemieux [dalemieux33@gmail.com](mailto:dalemieux33@gmail.com)

Service Co-Chairs:  
Martha Gross [grossmartha01@gmail.com](mailto:grossmartha01@gmail.com)  
Cathy Paglio [rpaglio1@gmail.com](mailto:rpaglio1@gmail.com)

Program and Event Co-Chairs:  
Anita Chandler [achandler@maine.rr.com](mailto:achandler@maine.rr.com)  
Gail Mazzone [mestormy70@gmail.com](mailto:mestormy70@gmail.com)

# Altrusa International

## International Service Project

### Days for Girls International

The DfG movement has reached more than one million girls and women and counting. Since 2019, Altrusa International, Inc. and Days for Girls have come together in partnership to improve the lives of women and girls internationally and has helped to reach **"Every Girl, Everywhere, Period."**

International President, Chris DeVlieger continues this partnership in her 2025 - 2027 Biennium.

FMI visit <https://www.daysforgirls.org/>



Altrusa Clubs in Puerto Rico proudly display the DfG kits they made.



Altrusa International Foundation of Portland, Maine, Inc.  
[altrusaportland@gmail.com](mailto:altrusaportland@gmail.com)  
PO Box 8834, Portland, ME 04104 USA  
<https://districtone.altrusa.org> <https://www.altrusaportland.org>  
<https://www.altrusa.org>

# Committee News

## From the Finance Committee

### We need prizes for our biggest fundraiser, our calendar raffle!

We want to start selling the raffles at the Empty Bowl(see Page 4 fmi) so please let Pam Lemieux and Christine Johnson know what you have for prizes no later than October 10th. You don't have to have the actual prize in hand but do need to make a firm commitment(to Pam Lemieux) to obtain it.

If you obtain a donation from a company, organization or an individual for the calendar (or for any other Altrusa Foundation purpose), please be sure to let Treasurer Marie Pike know who donated it, their mailing address, what the donation was, and the value. There are IRS acknowledgement rules we must follow for donations over a certain amount. Plus we want to formally acknowledge and thank all our donors. So send Marie the info regardless of the donation amount.

*Thank you for your support of this important fundraiser!*



## From the Service Committee:

We are happy to share that the Books that came from BAM's Book Drive in August are COMPLETED! FIVE FABULOUS ALTRUSANS put in Five Hours to sticker, bag, & shelve 15 boxes of books for our 2025 ABC program. Stay tuned for the start of the next bookdrive at BAM in the next couple of months, in time for Christmas. More BOOKS!!!!!!

We received 1015 Books valued @ \$15,176.52. WOW WOW! Thank you, Books-A-Million.

Martha Gross



From Right to Left:  
Trish Maxim  
Toni Parise  
Ann Smith  
Martha Gross



# Service Committee News

***If it's September, then we are preparing for our Empty Bowl Supper.***

This means Altrusan cooks are signing up for to fill their crockpot with their "world famous" soup or chowder. Altrusans (and sometimes family members, too) are signing up for the kitchen duty post, soup warming assignment, raffle ticket sales position, ticket sales or manning the bread and dessert table.

This is our 17th year of providing an "All You Can Eat" soup and chowder fest with ***all the proceeds*** going directly to Project FEED of Portland.



**Empty Bowl Supper  
Saturday, October 25  
First Lutheran Church  
132 Auburn Street  
Portland, Me**

As mentioned earlier, we will also be selling our 2026 Calendar Raffle at the door. Don't forget, we need prizes (Due Oct. 10) for the Raffle to make it a success.

See Poster on Page 5 for printing. You can also save it and use it as a FB/Instagram post.



With tables on either side for the sewing machines, Ironing boards in the background, cutting tables scattered throughout, this location, Old Robie School, and this assembly line fashion for the creation of these pillowcases is perfect and results in Grand Returns. This is the brainchild of Heidi Farrin, who is seen standing on the far right. Altrusan Christine Johnson, there to help with the pinning is seen fourth from the left.



Altrusan, Debbie Lemieux on the Right with a Cricket Comforts Stitcher, Sharon on the Left.

## **Cricket Comforts Fall Pillowcase Dash**

A fine group of stitchers show up monthly to create Burrito Pillowcases which are given to the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Med.

A group started several years ago, in the kitchen of Heidi Farrin has grown to an effort that provides approx. 2000 pillowcases stitched with love and in boys and girls fabric.

Altrusans were there today to witness and take part in the various stages of Pillowcase build. Altrusans donate books that are matched to the fabric theme and the combo of pillowcase/book are presented to the pediatric wing at Barbara Bush Children's Hospital.

Always on a Saturday, the next two events are:

Oct. 11 and Nov. 22, from 9 - 3 PM at the Old Robie School on Gray Road in Gorham.

Follow them on Facebook at CricketComforts or email to [cricketcomforts@yahoo.com](mailto:cricketcomforts@yahoo.com)



Meal includes all you can eat:

- Choice of Soups
- Bread & Crackers
- Hot & Cold Beverages
- Dessert



**Saturday, October 25, 2025**  
In Recognition of

**World Food Day**

Altrusa International of Portland is hosting our

**17th Annual Empty Bowl Meal**

**5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**  
**First Lutheran Church**  
**132 Auburn Street, Portland ME**

Choose a ceramic bowl to use for your meal & to keep as a reminder that there are always Empty Bowls in the world

In exchange for a meal & the bowl  
**Adults \$15**  
**under age 10 \$10**  
Tickets available at the door

This fundraiser benefits **Project FEED** an emergency food depot located at Woodfords Church in Portland ME

If you can't make it, but would like to help support Project FEED, visit our website to donate!!

[altrusaportland.org](http://altrusaportland.org)

# More Service Committee News

## Books Behind Bars

Several Altrusans gathered at Arlene Hanson's house to sticker and sort 800+ donated gently-used books. Arlene provided the lunch. Thank you, Arlene for your dedication to this project. There were so many book donations, other deserving organizations will also benefit from our efforts.



L to R: Anita C., Susan K., Ann Smith(seated), Martha Gross(background), Karen Valley



Left to Right: Karen Valley, Wanda Pettersen, Anita Chandler, Martha Gross, Susan F. King. Not shown, taking the photo is Christine Johnson.

**Next Sue's Supper  
to be held  
at Ronald McDonald House  
250 Brackett St.  
Portland, Maine  
October 21  
Contact Ann Smith to sign up if**



Nicki Griffin will be submitting a nomination for Altrusa Portland to be an eligible recipient of charity from 100+ Women Who Care.

The next 100+ Women Who Care of Southern Maine meeting will be held on Monday, November 3 - doors open at 5:30 at the Elks Lodge, 1945 Congress St, Portland. At the meetings held quarterly, members are allowed to nominate a deserving non-profit. They then draw three names from those nominations.

**If our name is drawn**, Nicki will do a 5 minute presentation about who we are, what we do and how we use our funds, and then 5 minutes of questions from the audience. After all three charities have presented, all the members present will vote on which one shall receive a \$50 donation that quarter from every member (over 500 members currently). The two organizations that were not selected for "first place" each receive \$2,000.

If you would like to attend the meeting as a guest, you are so very welcome to come. Of course, there is NO guarantee we will be drawn but it's a really great group of ladies and several Altrusans are already members.

Here's a link to more information about this group - <https://100womenwhocaresouthernmaine.com/> You can also follow them on Facebook.

# Committee News

## From the Membership Committee:

It's official! Sue Kohler & Lee-Ann VanAtta have now become our newest Altrusans.

We hope you all will join us for the initiation ceremony to be held on Wednesday, October 1 at our regularly scheduled Business meeting in the Oak Room at the Westbrook Community Center. Meeting starts at 6:00 P.M.



This committee is planning for our MEMBERSHIP DRIVE which will be held on November 19th, at our regularly scheduled Program meeting. See Membership Drive poster on Page 8 for printing and sharing on FB.

We ask All MEMBERS to make every effort to attend which demonstrates the size & enthusiasm of the good work our club does;

And PLEASE consider asking a friend, someone you work with, or meet in the checkout line at your favorite store or library..Post the membership drive poster on your FB page and ask folks to DM you for more details. We want GUESTS to attend who would like to learn about who & what Altrusa is, and **how they can serve their communities with us.**

There will be a FREE 2024-2025 Yearbook given to each guest. (Our Yearbook tells all about us & our activities.)

Our District One "Days for Girls" liaison, Claire Behrle will be onsite November 19 to present the various components of these DFG kits. Many of us Altrusans have seen the finished product and attended a hands-on presentation of the assembly of these kits. If you haven't seen the presentation it's a great opportunity to learn how we can get involved in the International Project.

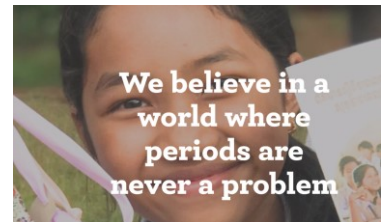


### THE DFG PAD

Our safe, beautiful and washable solution for managing menstruation. DFG Pads are delivered around the world in patent-winning Kits – along with vital health education.

There are many ways to contribute to this cause.

- Cutting
- Sewing
- Ironing
- Donating



## Sue Kohler 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!





**BECOME A MEMBER  
OF OUR TEAM**



# CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

*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



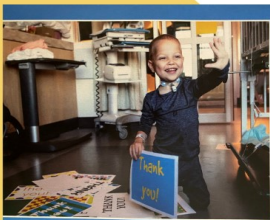
@AltrusaPortland



altrusaportland@gmail.com



www.altrusaportland.org



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**CONTACT US FMI ABOUT  
ATTENDING OUR  
NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP  
DRIVE MEETING**



**ASTRA of Lake Region High School**

Ability  
Service  
Training  
Responsibility  
Achievement



### ASTRA 2025 - 2026

The first ASTRA meeting of this school year will be on Tuesday, October 14th. Meetings will continue on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of every month through May of 2026. ASTRA meets from 10:10 - 10:45 AM in the Library conference room. There will be some months with only one meeting due to Holidays.

ASTRA Advisor Kristina Theriault reports that many students have asked about the club and want to get involved! We already have about **10+** new members! That is terrific news, because we need to replace the 7 Seniors who graduated in June; add some incoming Freshmen; and add some Sophomores who never joined when they were Freshmen last year.

Looking ahead, the only sad note is that Advisor Kristina Theriault has announced that this 5th year for her will be her last year as Advisor of our Lake Region H.S. ASTRA Club. She has loved being a part of the club, but with family responsibilities (2 very young children) and a new role at the high school, it is difficult to balance everything. She is hopeful that she can help us find a new person for the position before the year is out.

-Trish & Debbie

For the first time ever, Officers for this year were elected at their last meeting in May before the school year ended. They are:

From Right to Left:

- President - Katherine O'Connor (Senior)
- V.P. - Meadow Rowe ( " )
- Secretary - Jolene Mei (Junior)
- Treasurer - Hayden Roy ( " )
- Publicity - Ella Gibbons ( " )



# 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.

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](mailto:dalemieux33@gmail.com) with anything you consider newsworthy. My deadline for submissions is the Friday following the Program meeting.

-- Debbie L.

## 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 Workshop

November 8, 2025

University of Connecticut  
Storrs, Ct.

**Hosted by Northeastern Ct. Club**

### District One Conference

April 24 - 26, 2026

Stay tuned for More Details