



December 2025 Altrusagram



Upcoming Dates

**Business Meeting
New Member Initiation**
Wednesday, January 7
6:00 P.M.
Westbrook Community
Center
426 Bridge St.
Westbrook, Me.

Ronald McDonald House
Sue's Supper
Tuesday, January 20

**Program Meeting
Southern Maine Agency on
Aging**
Meeting will be on ZOOM
Stay tuned for ZOOM Link
Wednesday, January 21
6:00 P.M.

Business Meeting
Wednesday, February 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 our President:



Dear Members and Friends,
December is the first month of the second half of the Fiscal Year for our Club. We've been very busy and productive! And there is much to Celebrate!

We joined together at the North Deering Tavern on December 17th with a fun holiday party put on by the Program/Event Committee, chaired by Gail Mazzone and Anita Chandler. I want to thank them for their planning efforts as well as the others who helped make this a success. It was a fun night! We raised \$500 for Wayside Food Programs through our Silent Auction at the holiday party. The Auction is an annual event in support of raising money for Wayside who supply food to those in need. Food insecurity is a growing problem that whenever we can, we try to mitigate.

We now officially have two new paid members: Ann Nappi and Kristina Kentigian bringing our membership total back to 31! We welcome you and look forward to your upcoming initiations and to learning more about you as you give your "Getting to Know You Talk" at our business meetings soon.

As we are preparing for the new year, the Club Board met on the 19th and reviewed our Strategic Plan which we will talk about at the next business meeting.

Members have been busy selling raffle tickets for the January drawings. This is our big fundraiser for Foundation Service Projects. Get your Raffle tickets and sales to Pam Lemieux ASAP.

Looking forward to 2026, I would like to see us grow in service in support of our vision that states:

"Altrusa International of Portland, ME is a leader among service organizations, expanding leadership opportunities and providing services to communities worldwide."

Through the "Sibling Club" opportunity, we will be able to expand awareness and to grow our outreach across the country and even the globe. Something to work towards! We're looking forward to hearing more about this opportunity.

As of now we continue to deliver on our literacy projects, scholarships and food insecurity in our local communities.

With appreciation and best wishes for a Happy New Year!

"Growing Better Together with Gratitude"
Karen Valley
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 Portland gives Grants

In addition to the many scholarships and grants we deliver each year, we have added The Sisters in Arms Center as one of our Grant recipients.



November 14, President Karen Valley and Immediate Past President Wanda Pettersen of Altrusa International of Portland, Me, Inc. presented a \$800.00 check to Executive Director Rebecca Cornell du Houx, Program Manager Sara Fenwick, and Housing Coordinator Bailey Cloutier of Sisters in Arms. This vocational grant will assist Sister in Arms in support of outreach services to residents preparing their return to the community.

The Sisters in Arms Center provides a safe and secure haven for homeless women veterans and military sexual trauma survivors and their children. If you are a woman veteran who is homeless and/or would like more information for needed services, contact Sister in Arms at 207-530-0466.
<https://www.barhh.org/>



Altrusa International Foundation of Portland, Maine, Inc.

altrusaportland@gmail.com

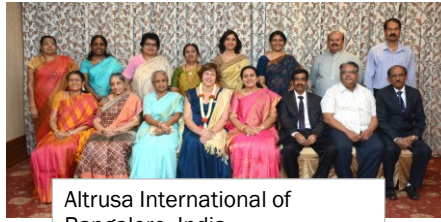
PO Box 8834, Portland, ME 04104 USA

<https://districtone.altrusa.org> <https://www.altrusaportland.org>
<https://www.altrusa.org>

Altrusa International Clubs Greetings and Celebrations from Near and Far



Altrusa International of Garland, Tx



Altrusa International of Bangalore, India



Altrusa International of Ocala, Fla



Some Holiday Dinner guests from the Altrusa International of Central Connecticut club.



Altrusa International of Biddeford-Saco, Me.



Altrusa International District Three - Virtual Club (Florida, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina)



Altrusa International of Reading-Berks, Pa



Altrusa International District Fifteen, New Zealand



Altrusa International Puerto Rico



Altrusa International of Mexico, Missouri

Altrusa Portland Club Member News

Fran Dyro

Frances Mary Dyro, M.D. (Oct. 15,1941 – Oct. 26, 2025)

Dr. Fran Dyro was, until her passing, the most senior member of our Portland Altrusa club. Her 52 Years started in 1973. Her Classification was Medicine/Neurology. At that time she was 32 years old and had a private practice in her home at 300 Danforth St. in Portland.



Fran was sponsored by her Obstetrician/Pediatrician and long time mentor, Dr. Alice Whittier, Charter member of our Portland Altrusa club in 1931.

Fran grew up in Portland and graduated from Portland High School in 1959 with high honors. She received a full scholarship to MIT, and became one of the very few women there at that time. She went on to the University of Maryland Medical School, and then interned at our Maine Medical Ctr, where she had been a 'Candy Striper' in her youth.

That was followed by a residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital; and then a practice from an office in her home. Fran went on to practice at the West Roxbury, Mass. Veteran's Hospital and serve on the faculty at Harvard Medical school. Her work there & at subsequent medical institutions led to many scientific and medical publications. She often served as an expert witness in medical - legal matters.

A proud Altrusan, Fran was President of our Portland club 1996 -1997. Then she got involved at the District level as Chair of Membership Development for Governor Sandra LaBonte (1998 -1999). At the International level under President Barbara Chin (1999-2000), Fran was Chair of Clubs-At-Large. During our 2000-2001 year, Fran ran for our District One 2nd Vice Governor, which had been double slated. She lost to Anne Marie Snyder.

In 2001 -2002 Fran accepted a position at NYMC Dep't of Neurology in ValHalla, NY. And was appointed Altrusa's Alternate Representative to the United Nations. She was living in Hartsdale, NY.

Besides her professional work, Fran was an accomplished seamstress, cook, forager of mushrooms, 10K runner, actress in local theater, and coloratura soprano (which she shared with the choir at Portland's Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church.)

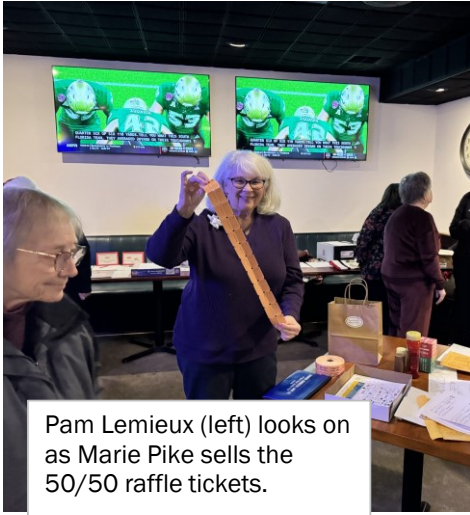
Fran also very generously shared her historic home for many of our Altrusa events.

We even dressed in her Sari's, collected over the years from her many months in India volunteering at a remote mission hospital.

If you never met Fran, it's because she has been our Emeritus member for 3 years due to her health situation. We miss her!

-Trish

Altrusa Portland Holiday Party



Pam Lemieux (left) looks on as Marie Pike sells the 50/50 raffle tickets.

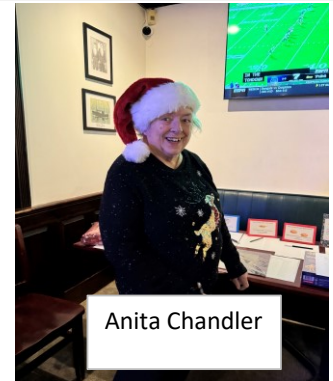
The Christmas spirit was on full display, as Altrusans gathered to celebrate each other, and support the giving tradition.

The Silent Auction had many items donated by members and the proceeds of \$500.00 went to the Wayside Food Programs and the 50/50 raffle proceeds went to Altrusa Portland Operations account.

Games and gifts were distributed. Many thanks to the Program/Event committee, Co-chaired by Anita Chandler and Gail Mazzone. Dinner was provided by North Deering Tavern. Delicious and beautifully decorated Christmas cookies provided by the Program/Event cmte.



Ann Smith and Cathy Paglio



Anita Chandler



Left to Right: Wanda Pettersen, Karen Valley and Susan F. King



Here is Christine Johnson, adorned with her Christmas gift, the Light Bulb glasses and the christmas light necklace. Each member was paired with a gift bag with a surprise inside.



Left to Right: Gail Mazzone, Debbie Lemieux, and Anita Chandler



Left to Right: Gail Mazzone, and Karen Valley

Committee News

From the Membership Committee



Welcome to our newest members. Ann Nappi, on the left and Kristina Kentigian, on the right.

Ann, sponsored by Debbie Lemieux and Kristina, sponsored by Karen Valley, will be initiated at the January 7 meeting, our first business meeting of the new year. Please join us as we celebrate adding 2 new Altrusan Sisters. **Bring a guest.** It will be held at the Westbrook Community Center at 6:00 P.M.



We are pleased to be able to present to Rae Clark-McGrath this certificate of appreciation and awarding her with Emeritus status.

Thank you Rae, for all your dedication to service in this club.

The District One Board unanimously approved the application for Emeritus status for Rae and International approved and sent this certificate.

From the Nominating Committee

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO VENTURE OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE



The nominating committee was elected at the December 3rd business meeting. The committee consists of Wanda Pettersen (chair), Fran Jensen, and Anita Chandler. Their charge is to find nominees for the open board positions for the 26/28 term. Positions open to nomination are Club President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Club Director.

Nominees will be presented at the February 4th business meeting. Voting will be at the March 4th business meeting.



Are you ready for an exciting growth opportunity? Looking for a new way to meet like-minded individuals who serve at various levels at the local, District, and International community? **If you're thinking** of ways that could help shape the future of our community service, locally and beyond, please consider **venturing outside your comfort zone** by joining the leadership team. The nominating committee would love to speak with you.

Should you have any questions, and if you would like to add your name to the slate, please reach out to any one of us on the committee.

Service Committee News

ABC

Altrusa Books for Children



Cathy Paglio reads to Kindergarten classes at the Canal School. Such good listeners.



January 20
Ronald McDonald House
Sue's Supper





ASTRA of Lake Region High School

Ability
Service
Training
Responsibility
Achievement



As of December, Our ASTRA roster now includes 47 students:
14 Seniors
19 Juniors
0 Sophomores
14 Freshmen
47



ASTRA picture taken for the Lake Region High School Yearbook after November Meeting. ASTRA Adviser Kristina Theriault is bottom row, Right.

At our most recent meeting on December 9, 2025 we had 32 students attending. Our Library conference room was humming with energy, as they chose their projects and signed up to volunteer.

December was an extremely busy month with 4 projects scheduled:

- 12/6 - Scholastic Book Fair for the Bridgton Rec. Dep't at Stevens Brook School;
- 12/13- Breakfast with Frosty at Songo Locks School (SLS) in Naples for their PTA;
- 12/17- Children's Holiday Shopping Day at Stevens Brook School (SBES) in Bridgton;
- 12/18-19 Letters from Santa for the Naples Rec. Department.

The first two events were on a Saturday; but the third event was on a Wednesday during school hours. 24 ASTRA students were bussed from Lake Region H.S. to SBES and spent nearly 4 hours each, one-on-one with the students from Pre-K to 5th grade, classroom-by-classroom every half hour, assisting them with their shopping & purchasing of gifts for their family members. Each child ended with a bag of totally wrapped gifts to surprise their family.

It was a very busy, but FUN day for everybody!!

Our next ASTRA meeting will be on Tuesday, January 13th; and then again 2 weeks later on January 27th.



This picture taken of the ASTRA students that volunteered to help at the Christmas Shopping event held at Stevens Brook Elementary.



Some ASTRA Elves helped with the wrapping of gifts



Some of the ASTRA elves helped the Stevens Brook students navigate through choosing the gifts to the purchase line.

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 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