



The Gainesville Altrusan

Newsletter for Altrusa International of Gainesville, FL, Inc

January 2026

A recap of the previous month (December) and a brief look ahead

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Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life."

Amy Poehler

For many years our club has been recognized at District Three Conferences for newsletter (Kim Pace, editor), ASTRA, Literacy Awards, Earnestine Milner Program Excellence and Outstanding Community Service.

Helpful Hint: If you find any font size too small for your comfort, please use the zoom function on your computer or device to enlarge text.

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Altrusa International of Gainesville, FL
PO Box 358510, Gainesville, FL 32635-8510

Outstanding Alachua County Volunteer Civic Organization

2010 "Work of Heart" Award

Home Club of 2009-2011 International Altrusa President, Donna Johnson

President's Message

Dear friends,

Now that we are past the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it's time to get ready for the hustle and bustle of our fundraising season. Our club will be gearing up for two significant events--Music Trivia Bingo on Friday, February 27 and the International Dinner on Friday, April 24.

Last year we voted to discontinue our committee-sponsored projects in favor of making all projects club-wide projects. This means there will be a coordinator who will oversee the event and set up committees as needed.

In addition to working on committees, we all need to find commercial/business/sponsors. A sponsor can be an individual or a business that makes a financial donation to our organization. A sponsor can also provide in-kind goods such as food or gift cards. We have revised our sponsor policy. In the past, we secured sponsors per event. Now, we will secure year-long sponsorships. They will be listed on all materials for events, added to our newsletter and other media.

BUT before you go out and secure sponsors, please check with Sara Freeborn or me, as we will have the new sponsorship information. In addition to sponsors, we need to invite guests from the outside community. As Altrusans we buy the tickets, do the work, bid on the silent auction, etc. I am encouraging you to invite friends from your other clubs, circles, church, neighborhoods etc.

At the next meeting in January we will have tickets and flyers available for Music Trivia Bingo. Please say yes when asked to help with decorations, food, or other needs.

May the New Year bring joy, peace and happiness to you and your entire family. Happy New Year!

In Altrusa Friendship.
Dee

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."

Ryunosuke Satoro

December 11 Holiday Gathering

Music of the season by “Any Note Will Do”

Suzanne Zam, Elise LeCompte, Joanne Ihas and Jennifer Rich



On left, Lorna gets a first look at fun snacks provided by our Hospitality Committee while Ginnie checks the eggnog.



Look left to see Joanne's special guest. You can tell what a delight her grandchild spread around by seeing Marge's face and Sharon's adoring look.



Justine and Auora reach the favorite part of the line. And do you notice that blue screen in the background? Yes, our technology foiled us yet again so stay tuned for the “This Is Us” slide show-- perhaps by spring.



Many Altrusans had already begun holiday travels so we had a cozy little gathering as these few random photos show. It was fun snacking, listening to the singers and chatting together to usher in the holidays.



It's so good to have Cherise back after her hip fracture ordeal. Now Marge's walker has a companion walker-- for a few more weeks anyway.



The very last photo on the bottom right would seem out of place with the rest of the décor, but it's not, as it reminds us that even though we didn't have a “regular” meeting our regular giving continues and Carolyn's trunk was packed with items for Ukraine and SWAG. Thank you for your constant generosity. More on the way will be clothes from Ginny and books for Majestic Oaks coming from Bennye.





December
 3 Celia Burger
 3 Harriet Buxbaum
 16 Freddie Dobson
 23 Pat Kilby

January
 2 Nancy Bell
 14 Joanne Broadie
 30 Wendy Bice
 31 Ester Tibbs

**“ALONE WE CAN
DO SO LITTLE;
TOGETHER WE
CAN DO SO MUCH.”**
- Helen Keller

Just a little bit more

Among the goodies served to 60 Internationals you'll see evidence of very welcomed popcorn and cookies from us that went to their holiday dinner which was on the evening of our meeting day. We just keep on giving.



I wish you all could see what Fran and Carolyn saw as Lyuba and helpers filled box after box after box...after box...you get it... of the incredible warm clothes—coats, sweaters, warm-up suits, and baby clothes galore you just donated, which are now on the way to Ukraine—over 400 lbs. I know Ginny found a source for wonderful things and some Altrusan Christmas elf gathered tons of baby things to send—a very welcome treat. (Who are you?)

And, of course, so many happy Altrusa House clients received their especially chosen gifts at the Altrusa House Christmas gathering. (see p 5 for more)



What's Coming Up

Monday, January 5 Write notes for Community Spring 11-12:30 at 218 NW 2nd Ave.

Thursday, January 8 Our noon meeting at Woman's Club

Saturday, January 17 serve lunch for Women Build (Trisha and Wafa).

Sign-up sheets for other Saturdays are on the sign in table for us to fill ASAP.

January 21 Women's Giving Circle Winter Social 5:30-7. Contact Carolyn if you'd like to attend with her.

Thursday, January 22 Noon meeting at Woman's Club

fyi...

**CONTINUING
to serve
and to collect**

**"You are never
too old to set
another goal
or to dream
a new dream."**

C.S. LEWIS

- ✓ Clean Non-recyclable tops and lids for AH art projects (Sara is contact)
- ✓ For Displaced Homemakers: gas cards, canned meats, Progresso soups with meat, saltines, jelly, fruit cups, individual boxes of cereal, nuts, microwavable pasta, canned corn and beans (Shea is contact)
- ✓ Children's and young adult books and women's inspirational and spiritual books for Majestic Oaks (Carolyn is contact)
- ✓ Suggested fabrics and supplies for Sewing Center (Dee is contact)
- ✓ Lyuba's aid to Ukraine continues. Please donate warm clothes, blankets, bedding, med supplies, peanut butter (Fran and Carolyn are contacts)
- ✓ Volunteer at Altrusa House (Fran, Harriet, Bennye are contacts)

Outstanding Organizations We've Heard From:

Please follow their activities on-line and help out in any ways you can.

- Enjoy/support the Performing Arts Center events that Brian shared with us.
- Bread of the Mighty (donate and/or deliver)
- North Florida Sewing Center (donate and/or sew)
- Peak Literacy (tutor on-line or in person)
- Partnership for Strong Families (respond to their requests)
- Women's Giving Circle \$1,000/year from many women provides amazing grants and benefits, and lunch and learn events inform givers.
- The Preserve (Norma's project)
- Akwaaba (summer tutoring)
- Voices Rising (attend/enjoy their seasonal concerts)
- Women Build Saturday lunch (keep your recipes ready and gather your groups)
- Community Spring letter writing first Monday of the month 11-12:30 at their building 218 NW 2nd Ave.
- Mobile Health Clinic (socks, blankets, coats are especially needed now for outreach to unhoused)
- Honor Center for Veterans (respond to their requests)



Here is Trisha staying late to help Carolyn finish her note cards. The more of us who will volunteer, the more encouraging notes can be sent—and in the shortest amount of time. Please plan to come to encourage and to be encouraged. The next session will be Monday, January 5, 11 -12:30 at the cozy Community Spring house 218 NW 2nd Ave.

Trisha and her husband and Wafa will be making lunch for Women Build January 17. We would like more Altrusans to help us with the 2026 build lunches (Feb 21, Apr 18, May 2). Volunteers? Let Carolyn and/or Trisha know and we'll get you plugged in. Thanks so much! Sign-up sheets are on the sign in table at every meeting.



Our Club's Anchor Project Since 1998

Please visit Altrusa House website and Facebook (and like/love it) each time.

<https://altrusahouse.net/>

<https://www.facebook.com/altrusahouse/>

Altrusa House Board Officers

President: Bennye Alligood

Vice-President: Fran Vandiver

Treasurer: Shea Huey

Secretary: Sara Freeborn

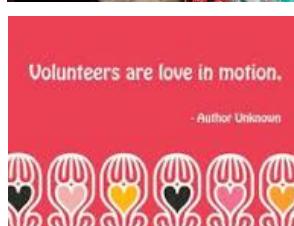
Altrusa House Director: Lee Johnson

(The entire board meets 3rd Thursday each month at Altrusa House)

Former Member and Altrusan of the Year, Nancy Hult sent this photo to share of Altrusa House founding member, Justine, and Altrusa House Emeritus members Barbara, Ray and Lisa—old friends enjoying a holiday gathering.



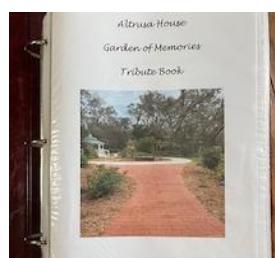
Altrusans gathered Dec 16 at Sara's to wrap gifts and then delivered them Friday, Dec 19 to our happy AH clients. (p. 3) Our service projects are always fun and satisfying for all.



HOW CAN YOU
SERVE?

Check with the staff about when you might drop by for a little while to say hello and visit a bit...bring some treats...prepare and share a short slide show of your travels ...read...help with art projects...play games...see what's going on. Lee, Lisa and Jenn can give you guidance and suggest times. Stay tuned for ideas the board is considering. Meanwhile Bennye, Fran and Harriet are good information sources as well. The AH clients can make your day--and you might make theirs!

The Garden of Memories pathway is constructed of engraved commemorative 4" x 8" brick pavers placed within the landscaped grounds to honor or remember special person(s) including clients, families, friends, and supporters of Altrusa House. Anyone may sponsor an engraving in a paver for a minimum of \$150. Additionally, anyone who wishes may make a donation in any amount and be listed as a donor in our continually updated Tribute Book which also lists all brick recipients.



Altrusa House is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit organization. Please contact Carolyn Harrell harrellland@cox.net for information about planning and placing an engraved brick in the Garden of Memories.

Altrusa Club Board of Directors

President: Dee Dugger
1st VP (Awards): Sara Freeborn

2nd VP (Programs): Pat Kilby

Treasurer: Tobi Doering

Recording Secretary: Marcia Utz

Director of Projects and Fundraisers: Bob Pearcy

Membership Director: Harriet Buxbaum

Immediate Past President: Carolyn Harrell

Director of Communications: Dee (interim)

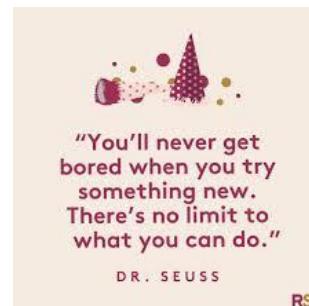


**Our purpose is to better our community
by bringing together volunteers
to identify and meet needs of our local area
through service and leadership.**

"Everything should be made as simple as possible
but not simpler."

Einstein

There was no December board meeting to recap; next board meeting will be Jan 27, 5:30 via Zoom.



Ginny sends a big thanks to all--especially kitchen staff, wine and gift card donators, crafters, attendees—contributors in any fashion to Festival of Trees! More than ever was raised this year--\$29,000 gross. Later this month we will know the net profit.

Please note: Our whole club does not meet for monthly business meetings. Along with announcements from club members about items of need or interest, we usually focus on Accents, speakers and service projects.

Business is taken up in monthly board meetings but, as stated in the bylaws, some items such as club fundraisers, club projects, board selection and budget are presented to the entire club for discussion and voting. PDF minutes of a board meeting can be requested from the club president.

Any club member wishing to attend a zoom board meeting to present an agenda item or just to see how a board meeting works (with a view of perhaps considering a board position) should contact Dee a week prior to the meetings, which are the 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm.

Any member wishing to nominate an Unsung Hero can text or email that information any time to Dee Dugger to present to the board. Anything a club member might want included in the newsletter can be sent to Carolyn Harrell before the 25th of each month. Thank you.



Governor Mantha Young Lake City, FL AltrusaDistrictThreeGovernor@gmail.com

Governor-Elect Nancy Shumaker Statesboro, GA nancyshumaker.altrusa@gmail.com

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