

## Winter 2026



### President's Message

**"If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way."**

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Winter has our club doing small things in a great way for our community. We helped stock the Arnette House closet with all the items young teens need or want—from fidget toys and lip balm to beef sticks and lotion! We sponsored an Arnette House family of 5 for the holiday. Delivery day had the car overflowing with toys, clothes, and kitchen items. Once again, we supported Operation Christmas Dinner for local veterans housed at the Ocala Ritz Veterans Village. Kate provides a delicious Christmas eve meal, and each veteran receives a gift bag with hygiene items, snacks, and other holiday goodies.

In 2026, we are gearing up for our fundraiser—Trivia Night. This year we have partnered with American Fundraising Foundation, AmFund, to help take our silent auction to the next level. Plans for honoring Nancy Jones with a Buddy Bench at South Ocala Elementary are coming together as well as our support for the Freedom Public Library children's room entryway.

Small things in great ways—helping our community—Altrusa at its finest.

Kindest regards,

Helen



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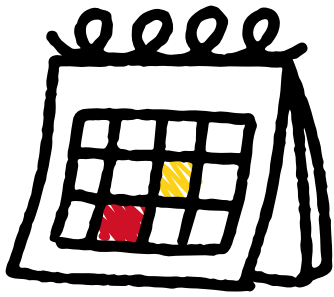
District Three  
[districtthree.altrusa.org](http://districtthree.altrusa.org)

International  
[altrusa.org](http://altrusa.org)

## **Altrusa International of Ocala, Florida**



If you know of a club member in need of our support and CARE, please contact Angie Dansby at [adansbyaltrusa@gmail.com](mailto:adansbyaltrusa@gmail.com) or text to (352) 427-8609



# UPCOMING CALENDAR

2026

- March 5<sup>th</sup> - Board meeting, noon - Zoom
- March 7<sup>th</sup> - Trivia Night - Country Club of Ocala
- March 12<sup>th</sup> - Club Meeting, noon - Braised Onion
- March 19<sup>th</sup> - Cluster Club, 6:00 pm - The Glen
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Board Meeting, noon - Zoom
- April 9<sup>th</sup> - Club Meeting, noon - Braised Onion
- April 11<sup>th</sup> - Anniversary Altrusa International  
1917-1926
- April 16<sup>th</sup> - Cluster Club, 6:00 pm - ELC
- April 24-25 - District Conference -Spartanburg, SC
- May 7<sup>th</sup> - Board meeting, noon - Zoom
- May 14<sup>th</sup> - Club meeting, noon - Braised Onion
- May 21<sup>st</sup> - Cluster Club, 6:00pm - ELC
- May 26<sup>th</sup> - 49<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Altrusa International  
of Ocala (organizational meeting 1977)
- June 4<sup>th</sup> - Board Meeting, noon - Zoom
- June 11<sup>th</sup> - Club Meeting, noon - Braised Onion
- June 18<sup>th</sup> - Cluster Club, 6:00 pm - ELC

In Memory of Betty Cluster



March 4, 1933 - February 1, 2026

Altrusan since 1987; granted Emeritus status 2023





## NINJA of the MONTH

### Nurture Your Inner Nancy Jones Attributes



**December:** *Maelyn Walker* is a quietly active member that has taken the lead on our new long-range project and always makes sure we have lunch ordered!

**November:** *Becky Long* was a blessing to Helen and is a great club member. She can relate to dealing with a family member with Parkinson's and stepped up to handle the President's duties in Helen's absence along with her regular duties.

**October:** *Jennifer Ruppel* was an absolute beast on our Make A Difference Day. After most had finished, she continues to box up our wrapped diapers and keep them all organized. She also eagerly accepted the responsibility of creating the Gifster list for our holiday family.

**September:** *Gloria James & Ann McKenzie* are two best buds. They agreed to co-chair a new committee - Programs. They can always be counted on to participate in any read aloud opportunities.

**August:** *Jennifer Rappa* an active, service minded Cluster Club member. A super painter for the Nook who got her husband to assist. She stepped up as Cluster Club secretary this year and printed stickers for the candy bags.

**July:** *Colleen Duris* is knowledgeable and dedicated to our mission. Her unselfishness is always evident. She offers support to all our programs and members to ensure our club's success. She is an outstanding leader.

**June:** *Brenda Ford* an active supporter of Cluster club; if she doesn't know an answer, she knows where to find it. She is a great listener and offers different perspectives.

# Service



## Arnette House

11h · 🌐

Thank you to Altrusa International Foundation of Ocala for sponsoring one of our clients and their family this holiday season! The car was overflowing with toys, clothes, and kitchen items for this family.

Recipients of this blessing were so excited that [Mrs. Lyn/Counselor](#) let them open a few of the gifts before Christmas. 😊

We love seeing our community show up and spread love during this time of year ❤️



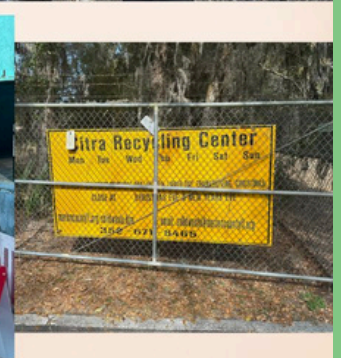
# Service



Thanks to Kate for allowing us to participate in another successful Operation Christmas Dinner, it was the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the event. Food and gifts were delivered and distributed to the 40 Veterans housed at the local Ritz. We appreciate being able to share such blessings with others.

# NANCY F. JONES BUDDY BENCH PROJECT

## SAMMIE'S BUDDY BENCH PROJECT



The club members came through and collected over 1,800 #2 recyclable items. We also have confirmed our partnership with South Ocala Elementary School. The National Honor Society Students are leading the drive to collect the recyclable items. Once they have 500 we will have enough to secure our Polywood "Buddy Bench". Stay tuned for more details to come.



# ASTRA



**wphsastra**  
Westport High School



The West Port High School (WPHS) ASTRA club participated in the WPHS Fall Candy Trail and Christmas Tree Trail. They won first prize in both events which earned the club \$200!

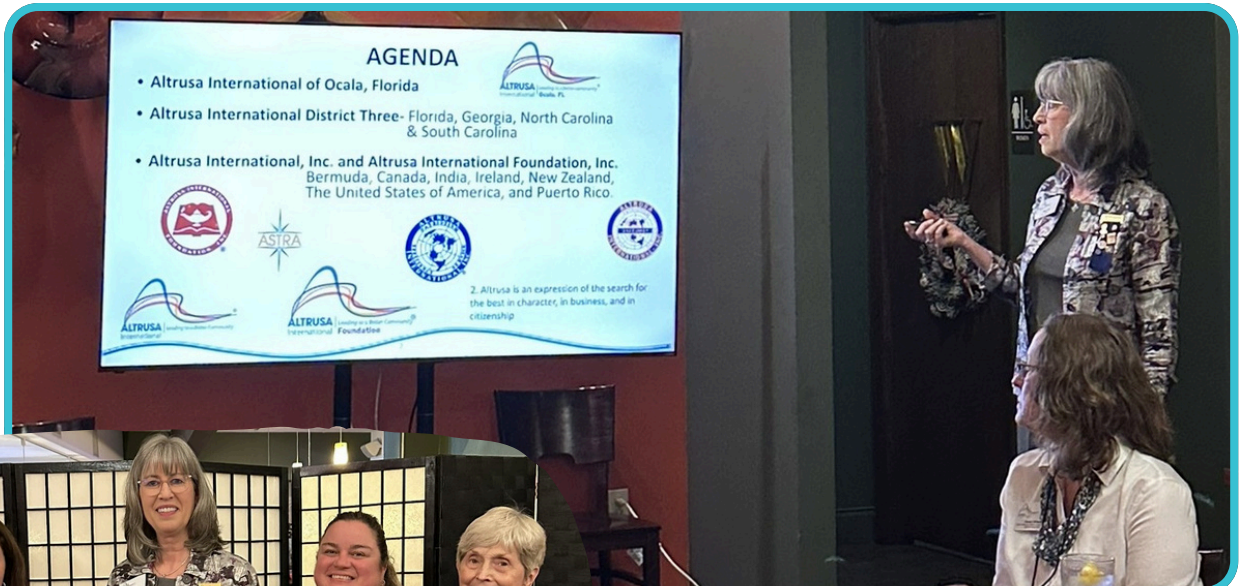
# Programs

In **December**, we had “member” time. We celebrated the holidays with homemade treats for all, collected items for our holiday family and enjoyed a wonderful game created and shared by Becky Long, a fun time for all!

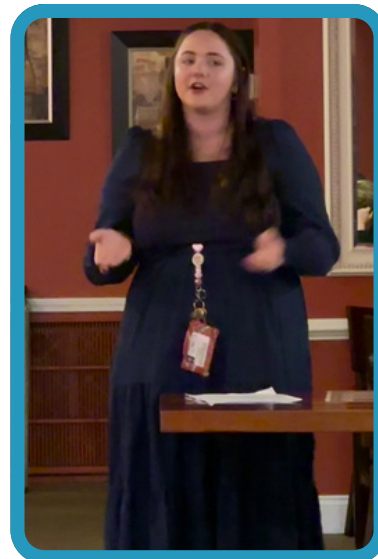


# Programs

In **January**, Becky Long was at it again. She presented an excellent presentation on Altrusa and our club for our Add-An-Altrusan guests. It was also a good re-orientation for our members!



In **February** we met the 2025 Golden Apple Rookie Teacher of the Year, Courtney Morris, teacher at Stanton-Weirsdale Elementary. She was also a recipient of the Public Education Foundation Teacher 2 Be program, a Grant for Good Ideas recipient and praised the Tools 4 Teaching Store, ALL programs we support.



# HOLIDAY GATHERING

Thank you to Mary Cay for once again hosting the annual Holiday Celebration!





Greetings and welcome to the new year! I hope 2026 is off to a good start for you. This time of year offers the chance to think a little differently. Winter invites thoughtful reflection, intentional resets, and of course, dreaming and casting a vision for what lies ahead before spring weather and District Conferences arrive. Your District Boards are busy planning outstanding workshops, keynote speakers, service projects, and meaningful opportunities to network and exchange ideas. Please make sure to mark your calendar to attend your District Conference to reconnect with fellow Altrusans and make new friends.

Just in time for Valentine's Day, we are launching our first membership challenge entitled "Be a Friend- Bring a Friend." It's the perfect time to put two words of my biennium theme to life...LOVE and LEGACY. I invite you to ask someone to attend a meeting with you, participate in a service project, or- best of all - become an Altrusan. Show them the love that comes from part of our organization and dream with me about the legacy we can build by expanding the service we provide in our communities.

What do you need to do for the "Be a Friend - Bring a Friend" challenge?

- Recruit at least one new active (not dual) member between February 14th - March 14th.
- Ensure the new member is entered in Group Tally during this period, and that their dues are paid.
- Before April 1st, Altrusa International will draw five winning clubs, each receiving \$100 to use for a membership event, a service project or where it is needed most.

Along with the "Bring a Friend - Build a Future" membership challenge, I am delighted to announce an update to our sponsor program - an easier way to recognize and appreciate Altrusans who recruit new members. Be sure to check out page 3 to see the new sponsor pins and learn more about this revised program.

Many of you are doing amazing service projects - especially distributing books - that will enrich the lives of others for generations to come this biennium. Make sure to enter all books distributed and service hours completed so far and going forward. This will allow us to report progress by District in next edition of The Compass. The reporting link can be found on the Membership page of altrusa.org.

Speaking of our website, I encourage you to visit it regularly. Our International Committees are hard at work, and it shows. We are initiating new programs, updating forms, pictures, and information as much as possible - including the newly revised International Service Award entry forms. So many of you and your clubs are providing wonderful service, and I hope you submit at least one application this year and even more next year.

As we look to spring, I hope this time of year inspires you to dream about growth. I love watching trees and flowers bloom in the early spring, and the same is true for Altrusa. I look forward to seeing our membership flourish and witnessing the growth that follows. What seeds will you plant and grow on your Altrusa journey this spring? Together, let's grow the LOVE, LITERACY & LEGACY of Altrusa.

With Altrusa Love,

Christine "Chris" DeVlieger

President of Altrusa International, Inc.

**International Convention 2027**  
**Hyatt Regency, Columbus, Ohio**  
**July 21 - 24, 2027**





## **Buzzin’ with the Governor – February 2026**

By Mantha Young, District Three Governor

February is a month that naturally turns our hearts toward love - and when I think about District Three, love is exactly what I see in action every single day. I am so grateful for each of you and the many ways you serve your clubs and communities. Your kindness, compassion, and willingness to step in wherever needed truly make our district BEE Essential.

As Helen Keller so beautifully said, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” That spirit of togetherness is what makes Altrusa so special.

One of my favorite moments this month was visiting the forming Altrusa Club of Central Polk County. We had such a wonderful time making Valentine’s cards for local Veterans - simple acts of love that carried big meaning. Laughing, creating, and serving side by side reminded me how powerful fellowship can be when hearts come together for others.

February also highlights a meaningful United Nations observance that connects beautifully with our mission. International Mother Language Day on February 21 celebrates the importance of protecting languages and honoring cultural diversity around the world. Languages carry stories, traditions, and identity. By valuing every voice, we build stronger, more inclusive communities - something Altrusans do every day through literacy and service.

As we look ahead, I would truly love to see us fill our District Conference in Spartanburg with Altrusans from all over District Three. It’s such a special time to reconnect, share ideas, and enjoy fellowshiping with like-minded friends who share the same heart for service.

Let’s continue spreading kindness, building connections, and loving our communities well. That’s how we Bee Essential.

**Mantha Young**  
Governor, Altrusa District Three



**District Conference 2026**  
**Spartanburg, SC**  
**April 24-25, 2026**

# 2026 District Three Conference Schedule at a Glance! Spartanburg, South Carolina

Rosemary Leake & Tina Luca Conference Co-Chairs

## Schedule at a Glance 2026 District Three Conference

### Thursday, April 23

7:30 – 10:00 pm

6:00 – 7:30 pm

### Friday, April 24

8:00 am – 10:00 pm

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

9:00 am- 3:45 pm

1:00 – 2:30 pm

3:30 pm

3:45 – 4:45 pm

5:00 – 6:30 pm

6:45 – 8:45 am

### Saturday, April 25

7:00 am – 7:45 am

8:00 am – 8:25 am

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

7:30 am – 2:30 pm

8:30 am – 10:00 am

10:15 am – 11:00 am

11:15 am – 11:45 am

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

1:45 pm – 2:30 pm

1:45 pm – 2:30 pm

1:45 pm – 2:30 pm

2:45 pm – 3:30 pm

2:45 pm – 3:30 pm

2:45 pm – 3:30 pm

3:45 pm – 4:15 pm

4:00 pm

6:00 – 7:00 pm

7:00 – 9:30 pm

### Sunday, April 26

8:00 – 11:30am

Pre-Conference District Board Meeting/ Cashmere  
Pre-Conference District Foundation Meeting/Gabardine

Pre-Conference District Board Meeting / Cashmere  
Registration and Credentials \* / Rotunda  
District Foundation Auction\* / Altrusa Store \* / Gabardine  
Past Governor's Luncheon / Linen

Meet & Greet for First Timers / Step & Repeat

Hive Time – Meet & Mingle / Linen

First Business Session / Organza B & C

District Foundation Awards Dinner and Annual Meeting / Organza A

Registration Credentials\*/Rotunda

Voting / Linen

Vendors/Pre-Function C

District Foundation Auction\* / Altrusa Store \* / Gabardine

District Awards Breakfast / Organza A

Second Business Session/ Organza B & C

Fun Time "BINGO"/Organza B & C

Leadership Luncheon/Organza A

Beekeepers – Chris Bridges/Organza B

Genealogy/Organza C

Book Club/Linen

Beekeepers – Chris Bridges/Organza B

Genealogy/Organza C

Book Club/Linen

Service Project/ Organza B

District Foundation Board meeting/Gabardine

Cocktail Reception for International Rep / Pre-Function C

Governor's Banquet/Organza A

Post-Conference District Board Meeting / Cashmere



Rosemary Leake



Tina Luca

*The above schedule is subject to change.*

\*Registration and Credentials, Altrusa Store and District Foundation Auction will be closed during meals and business meetings.



**COME JOIN US AT  
CONFERENCE!  
Check out the  
latest DSB for  
information.**

# Altrusa Accent



Since 1946, Altrusa International has held observer status at the United Nations (UN). At that time, Altrusa was the first international classified service club for then executive and professional women to have an official observer appointed to the United Nations, Frances K. Marquis, president of the New York City (NYC) Altrusa Club. Frances was a close friend to another active NYC Altrusan, Eleanor Roosevelt. Eleanor Roosevelt delivered an address at the 1945 San Francisco UN Conference on International Organization and later then President Harry S. Truman appointed Mrs. Roosevelt to Chair the famous UN Human Rights Committee.

In 1978, our UN membership was assigned to the level of a NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) in roster status within the ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council). In this capacity, we join together with other NGOs, empowered to attend open General Assembly sessions and UN briefings/conferences related solely to global and social concerns, and receive UN Ground Passes.

In each biennium, the International Board appoint 5 representatives to attend and monitor UN meetings and briefings, as allowed. Altrusa's representatives may participate (either in person or via teleconference/Facebook) in weekly briefings/"chats" conducted by the UN Department of Global Communication (DGC), Civil Society (NGOs). In addition, they may serve on DGC Annual Conference committees and other projects, formed to further the improvement of the human condition worldwide.

Kathleen Schrein, Chair, United Nations Committee

# Altrusa Accent



UNITED NATIONS

## UNITED NATIONS DAYS OF OBSERVANCE A CALL TO SERVICE FOR ALTRUSA

United Nations Days of Observance shine a light on global priorities and inspire local action. These dates are perfect moments for Altrusa clubs to serve, advocate, and educate in our communities.

### March 8 Int'l Women's Day

Mentorship •  
Empowerment  
Programs • Hygiene Kits

### March 22 World Water Day

Clean-Water  
Fundraisers • Hygiene  
Education

### April 7 World Health Day

Health Fairs • Blood  
Drives • Wellness  
Outreach

### April 22 Earth Day

Community Clean Ups •  
Recycling • Tree Planting

### Sept 8 Int'l Literacy Day

Book Drives • Reading  
Tutors • Adult Literacy

### Sept 21 Int'l Day of Peace

Peace Walks • Youth  
Dialogue • Kindness  
Campaigns

### Oct 16 World Food Day

Food Drives •  
Community Meals •  
Garden Projects

### Dec 5 Int'l Volunteer Day

Volunteer Recognition •  
Service Showcases

### Dec 10 Human Rights Day

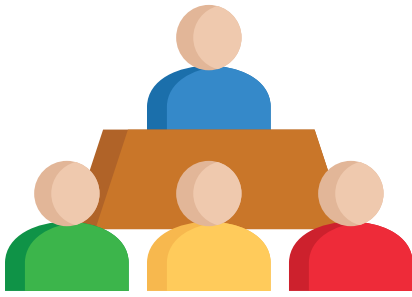
Education • Advocacy •  
Donation drives

**Get Involved! Select an Observance as a service project anchor. Partner with local organizations. Share your impact through photos and stories.**

To learn more about Altrusa and its relationship with the UN, please visit:

<https://login.altrusa.org/united-nations/>





## CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President - Helen McDavid
- Vice President - Becky Long
- Treasurer - Scott Tice
- Secretary - Wendy Williams
- Director - Debbie Catabia
- Director - Frances Ferguson
- Immediate Past President - Colleen Duris

## FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President - Maclyn Walker
- Treasurer - Connie Larsen
- Director - Brenda Ford
- Director - Angie Dansby
- Director - Mary Cay Landt

## CLUB COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- ASTRA - T.J Bright
- CARE - Angie Dansby
- Cluster Club - Judi Zanetti
- Fundraising - Kate Fink
- Membership - Becky Long
- Program - Gloria James/  
Ann McKenzie
- Service- Debbie Catabia/  
Wendy Williams



- March 15 Valerie Forster
- March 30 Joan Coke
- March 30 Becky Long
- April 22 Debbie Catabia
- April 26 Elaine Goodelle
- April 27 Scott Tice
- May 10 Gloria James
- May 20 Helen McDavid
- May 21 Anita Winter
- May 26 Jennifer Rappa

# MINUTES

## Altrusa International of Ocala, Inc. Business Meeting Minutes November 13, 2025

The meeting was held at Braised Onion.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 12:09 p.m. by President Elect Becky Long.

The Altrusa Grace and Pledge of Allegiance were recited.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** No guests.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The October Business Meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**CORRESPONDENCE –** No report in Elaine Goodelle's absence.

**TREASURER'S REPORT –** No report in Scott Tice's absence.

**AL T. RUSA – Becky Long:** \$25.43 balance.

**RAFFLE:** This month's raffle prize was donated by Brenda Ford. Colleen Duris won.

**PROGRAM:** Gloria James introduced Heather Gilardi and Heather Goodall from AdventHealth Ocala. Heather Gilardi was an ASTRA Board member in high school (T.J. Bright was her advisor). She is now the Birth Coordinator at AdventHealth. Heather Goodall is the NICU Manager.

AdventHealth is a Christian based medical facility. They purchased Munroe Regional in 2018 and remain the only Marion County hospital with maternity and pediatric services. They deliver 2,500 babies a year at the Ocala facility. They have been recognized by US News and World Report as a regionally ranked and high performing hospital and by Cribs for Kids® as a Bronze Certified Safe Sleep Hospital. Care programs are evidence based.

Their high-risk obstetrical unit opened in 2023, and Dr. Pinette sees 4,000 patients a year for high-risk pregnancy care. The unit has nine beds and will soon have 10. They provide critical care.

The McKenzie Kearney Gray Maternal Fetal Medicine program was started in fall of 2022, and the grand opening was in 2023. The Medical Office Building opened this year.

The Labor and Delivery Unit has ten private birthing rooms. The obstetric emergency department is for those who are 20+ weeks pregnant and includes four private rooms. Their NICU is a Level II B, which means they serve babies born at 30+ weeks and are at least 1,250 grams (about 3 lbs.). The NICU has 12 private rooms, two isolation rooms, a sleepover room, and a five-bed stepdown section. This area replaced the newborn nursery, as healthy babies stay with their mom. For the last three months, the NICU has an average of 8-9 babies at a time. They are seeing an increase in naturally occurring multiple births. Babies typically stay in the NICU through their due dates. There is a Family Center with books to read to the babies and activities for siblings. There is a graduate wall for pictures when babies are discharged. Families take home a NICU Milestones memento for their baby books.

NICU babies can have intubation for up to 72 hours before they must be transported to Orlando. Morbidity increases by 50% if they are transferred. Orlando has a Level IV surgical NICU center. There is a Ronald McDonald House in Orlando for families whose babies must be transported to Orlando for care.

The Mother Baby Unit has 20 private rooms, provides portraits, birthday meals, lactation support, and education.

AdventHealth hosts a pregnancy and infant loss memorial event in October each year. Angels Above Baby Gowns creates infant burial gowns from donated wedding dresses.

# MINUTES



Donation and Volunteer opportunities:

- Donations of books and activities for the Family Center
- NICU infant cuddlers (requires three months of training / getting familiar with hospital and commitment to 4-hour day)
- Knitted infant graduation caps

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**ASTRA:** Becky reported that ASTRA volunteers attended Make a Difference Day.

**Care – Angie Dansby:** Cards were passed for Val, Betty and TJ.

**Cluster/Fundraising:** Connie reported that candy bags were packed at the last Cluster Meeting for the Canterfield Appreciation event. Four Altrusa members attended. Brenda commented on what a nice job staff did with decorations and making the event special for the residents.

**Long Range Planning – Connie Larsen:** The Committee met Tuesday to review the library's plan. They found an artist who can create a similar entrance to the Freedom Children's Library as we had done for the Main Library, with updated books depicted. The cost is \$14,000. The library will have access to the space on December 1 and is planning for a March 1 Grand Opening event. It will take the artist two months to fabricate and install the entranceway after the design is approved. We will have money left in both the Nancy Jones and Long Range funds after the Buddy Bench and Library Entranceway projects. The committee is considering additional projects including book donation, library room decorations, and others. The urgency is to move forward with the entranceway so it will be complete for the Grand Opening event.

**Motion:** Debbie Catabia moved and Francis Ferguson seconded to go ahead with the \$14,000 project for the library. The motion was approved unanimously. A majority of the Foundation Board was present and voting.

Maclyn will follow up with the library.

**Membership – Becky Long:** Nothing new to report. Has a prospective member to follow up with (Heather Gilardi, AdventHealth).

**Newsletter – Colleen Duris:** The deadline for the next quarterly newsletter is November 21. The Yearbook was sent out. Number two recyclable plastics are needed for the Buddy Bench. Number two recyclables are thicker plastics like milk jugs, detergent bottles, shampoo bottles, caps from water and soda bottles. Colleen will reach out to South Ocala Elementary School to see if they will partner with us to collect plastic recyclables.

**Program – Gloria James/Ann McKenzie:** December is our Holiday Fellowship meeting and January is Add an Altrusan.

### Service – Debbie Catabia/Wendy Williams:

- 2,505 diapers were donated to the Early Learning Coalition in October.
- Fourteen Altrusans, two volunteers, and five ASTRA members assisted in the Day of Giving. 9,150 diapers were wrapped and 262 bags were stuffed.
- Four Altrusans participated in the College Park Read-In.
- The Giftster list has been set up for the Holiday Family and Arnette House Closet. Brenda asked about the Tools4Schools Signature Brands donation of sprinkles, since the mom has asked for baking supplies. Colleen will ask Ashley at the Public Education Foundation.
- Debbie is getting the hams, pies, and gravy for Operation Christmas Dinner. Gloria asked about donating additional food. Colleen will reach out to Kate to see if there are needs other than the deodorant and snacks.

**Web/Social Media:** No report in Helen's absence.

**FOUNDATION REPORT – Maclyn Walker:** No report.

# MINUTES

## NEW BUSINESS:

- District Three Awards: Colleen reported that awards should be posted on the District Three website. Please review and be thinking about award entries.
- December Desserts: Maclyn reported that Braised Onion has approved us bringing in bite-sized desserts for our December meeting. Colleen will bring some. An email will be sent with additional details or sign-up.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/HAPPY BUCKS:

- October NINJA: Jennifer Ruppel was named the October NINJA for being a beast at Make a Difference Day. She stayed late to help box up the wrapped diapers. Jennifer also created the Giftster list.
- Happy Bucks:
  - Connie's daughter's birthday was yesterday, and she was notified by a defense contractor she had worked with that she will be receiving a job offer. She had been on hold due to her internship agreement with the Department of Defense. DOD couldn't hire her due to their hiring freeze and she wasn't allowed to work for a contractor through November 5.
  - Becky's son, Matthew Cretul, is running for County Commissioner. Becky passed Candidate Petitions to help him get on the ballot.
  - Ann is happy that it's basketball season. She can walk around without a cane. Her holiday family packages are wrapped, and her annual interfaith donation is completed. She is getting things done in preparation for her December cruise.
  - TJ's husband is doing a whole lot better. His medication was changed, which seems to have helped. He hasn't fallen in a long time and can be left alone at times. TJ has arranged with her daughter to meet with the caretaker on Altrusa meeting days, so she expects to be able to attend more often.

## REMINDERS:

- [Track your volunteer hours](#)
- Board Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at noon via Zoom
- Business Meetings are the second Thursday of each month at noon at Braised Onion
- Cluster Club meets the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. The November 20 meeting is at the Early Learning Coalition.
- November 21 is the submission deadline for the Newsletter.
- December 5 at 5:30 p.m. is the Holiday Party at Mary Cay's home, 1336 SE 8<sup>th</sup> St., Ocala. Board Members will bring wine. Those who wish to participate in the gift exchange should bring a wrapped gift valued at \$15-\$20.
- Holiday family gifts and Arnette Closet items can be brought to the November Cluster Meeting, Holiday Party, or December Business Meeting (preferred).
- December 11 – gifts will be delivered to Arnette House after the Business Meeting – all are invited.
- Operation Christmas Dinner – Kate is collecting full-size men's deodorant and individually wrapped snacks (sweet and salty). Bring donations to November Cluster or Holiday Party at Mary Cay's.
- Trivia Night is March 7, 6 p.m. at Country Club of Ocala; Commitment forms are due to Connie and Kate by January 31.
- Web addresses for [Altrusa International](#), [District Three](#), and [Ocala](#)

The Benediction was recited, and the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Jane Fontaine – November 5, Frances Ferguson – November 11, Maclyn Walker – November 20, and Brenda Ford – November 25

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Diane Barrineau, TJ Bright, Debbie Catabia, Angie Dansby, Colleen Duris, Karen Elliott, Frances Ferguson, Brenda Ford, Gloria James, Maria Kusmierz, Connie Larsen, Becky Long, Ann McKenzie, Maclyn Walker, Wendy Williams, Anita Winter

Submitted by Wendy Williams





# MINUTES

Altrusa International of Ocala, FL Inc.  
*Cluster Club Meeting Minutes*  
November 20, 2025  
Early Learning Coalition, 6pm  
2300 SW 17<sup>th</sup> Rd., Ocala, FL

The meeting was called to order by Judi Zanetti at 6:03pm and everyone in attendance recited the Altrusa Grace followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the October 16, 2025 meeting were approved.

**Business Meeting recap:**

Correspondence: Interfaith & Newsletter.

Treasurer: Scott reported we are all good.

Program Recap: Advent Health ICU. Wendy provided information.

ASTRA: Officers volunteered October 25<sup>th</sup> at ELC for diaper wrapping.

Cluster/Fundraising: Sponsorship letters & forms have been emailed to everyone. It was decided not to do the banner due to cost for a new one. Cluster will do two raffle baskets (beach/boat). Jennifer Rappa will do an alcohol basket.

AmFund: Wendy provided information about trips and that they will have a table at Trivia Night. She will email a survey to see what trips are of more interest. Canterfield thank you celebration was a success!

Membership: None. Although there are a few possibilities and remember that January is Add an Altrusan.

Web/Social Media: Great!

Care: Helen's brother-in-law passed as well as Jennifer Rappa's mother-in-law.

Long Range Planning: The committee approved \$14,000 for the library children's room entryway which will be presented to the Club & Foundation Board. We are also collecting #2 recyclables for the Nancy Jones Buddy Bench.

Newsletter: Deadline is November 21, 2025.

Service: 2,505 diapers for a Day of Giving. College Park Read-In. Upcoming: Bring gifts/items for the Holiday Family, Arnette House Closet & Operation Christmas Dinner to the December business meeting and/or Holiday party. Jennifer Ruppel provided information for Giftster.

Did You Know? Becky provided information/history on Al T. Rusa

Announcements/Happy Bucks/October NINJA to be announced next month as Helen was not present.

**New Business/Upcoming Dates:**

Long Range Planning: Next meeting TBA.

December 5<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30pm-Holiday party at Mary Cay's. \$15-20 gift if participating in the exchange.

December 11th: Next business meeting at Braised Onion & delivery of gifts to Arnette House after.

January 15th: Next Cluster Meeting at Early Learning Coalition. Scott will bring snacks.

January 31<sup>st</sup>: Commitment forms due to Connie and Kate.

March 7<sup>th</sup>: Trivia Night at County Club of Ocala.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm with all members reciting the Altrusa Benediction

Attendance: Judi Zanetti, Wendy Williams, Amanda White, Scott Tice, Elaine Goodelle, Jennifer Ruppel, Becky Long, Kate Fink & Jennifer Rappa.

# MINUTES

## Altrusa International of Ocala, Inc. Business Meeting Minutes December 11, 2025

The meeting was held at Braised Onion.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m. by President Helen McDavid.

The Altrusa Grace and Pledge of Allegiance were recited.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Ann McKenzie introduced her husband Jay McKenzie.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The November Business Meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**CORRESPONDENCE – Elaine Goodelle:** Received two invoices from Dr. Lentch's office and passed them on to Connie and Debbie. The Interfaith newsletter and a card and Annual Report from College of Central Florida were also received.

**TREASURER'S REPORT – Scott Tice:** Two members owe for last quarter's lunches. After the first of the year, the next invoices will be emailed.

**AL T. RUSA – Becky Long:** \$25.43 balance.

Helen presented Mary Cay with a thank you gift for hosting the holiday party.

**RAFFLE:** This month's raffle prizes were donated by Maclyn Walker, Frances Ferguson, and Becky Long. Scott Tice, Elain Goodelle, and Connie Larsen won.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**ASTRA:** Helen reported that TJ is ready to step back in as Chair. Colleen sent the ASTRA award form to Eleanor.

**Care:** Colleen passed cards for Val Foster, Angie Dansby, Betty Cluster, Helen McDavid, and Jennifer Rappa.

**Cluster/Fundraising:** Wendy provided an update on the vacation survey.

**Long Range Planning – Connie Larsen:** Suggestions for books to be represented on the library entranceway were emailed to the committee members. The committee will meet in early January to discuss next steps and plans for additional funds. Recyclables can be brought to meetings.

**Membership – Becky Long:** Colleen is assisting Becky with a perspective member packet that can be emailed – possibly the Yearbook without member contact details. Scott said Amanda White sent Heather Gilardi a membership packet. Becky will invite Heather to Add An Altrusan meeting.

**Newsletter – Colleen Duris:** Helen said the newsletter looked wonderful. Colleen said the next newsletter will be in February.



# MINUTES

**Program – Gloria James/Ann McKenzie:** Gloria reported that January’s program is Add An Altrusan, and Becky is planning for it. February’s program will be the Rookie Teacher of the Year, who was one of our Teacher to Be scholarship recipients.

**Service – Debbie Catabia/Wendy Williams:** Debbie thanked members for all of the family gifts.

**Motion:** Mary Cay moved and Connie seconded moving \$300 budgeted for the Berkley Point library project to the Holiday Family project. The motion was approved unanimously. A majority of the Foundation Board was present and voting.

The funds approved by Foundation were used to provide extra gifts and gift cards for the family. Debbie ensured each of the children received the same number of gifts.

Next week Debbie will purchase hams, gravy, and pies for the veterans.

Discussion was held on if we should continue to use Giftster for the Holiday Family wish list. Several members had trouble accessing and using the platform. Other suggestions included Elfster, a shared Google Sheet, Angel Tree type distribution, or passing around a sign-up sheet. Helen suggested dividing the group and trying two different methods to determine which works best.

**Web – Helen McDavid:** No new report.

**FOUNDATION REPORT – Maclyn Walker:** All business has been taken care of.

## OLD BUSINESS:

- [District Three Awards](#) – Helen needs ideas for the Letha Brown Literacy Award or Mamie L. Bass Service Award. Volunteer writers are also needed.

## NEW BUSINESS:

- Governor Mantha is looking for volunteers to help at the registration table at the District Three Conference in Spartanburg, SC.
- Connie is looking for non-Altrusan award scoring volunteers for Foundation Awards.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- November’s NINJA is Becky Long for being a blessing to Helen during her difficult month.

**PROGRAM:** Becky prepared an “Are You Naughty or Nice” game. All attendees received treats and a note with a description of what they had done naughty or nice.

## HAPPY BUCKS:

- Mary Cay thanked those who came to the holiday party. She was thankful that her holiday parties are done. She is hopeful that the Gators may have gotten the coach right – she led the “We suck less” chant at the UF v FSU game. Mary Cay also thanked Ann for bringing her some Waldorf Salad, as Ann’s version is the only one Mary Cay has liked.
- Maria shared that most of her relatives live in Hungry. Thirty years ago her cousin came for the holidays. This year her cousin’s son is spending Christmas with them after playing basketball in Oklahoma.
- Elaine is grateful that her daughter is thriving in CA. She has made friends and is volunteering with both the Humane Society and Hospice. She is very grateful that her daughter’s best friend has also gotten a job in CA and will be just an hour away.





## MINUTES

- Connie's daughter has been released from her Dept. of Defense obligations. She has gotten a job with a contractor she worked with during her time at DOD and is moving to Shalimar, FL, next week – she'll only be five hours away.

### REMINDERS:

- [Track your volunteer hours](#)
- Board Meetings are on the first Thursday of each month at noon via Zoom. Due to the holidays, January's Board Meeting is Tuesday, January 6.
- Business Meetings are the second Thursday of each month at noon at Braised Onion.
- Cluster Club meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. Next meeting is January 15 at the Early Learning Coalition.
- Delivering gifts to Arnette House after the December 11 Business Meeting. All are welcome so we can get a group photo.
- Trivia Night is March 7, 6 p.m. at Country Club of Ocala. Commitment forms are due to Connie and Kate by January 31. Please let Elaine know about gift baskets you're providing. Send ads to Kate.
- Buddy Bench – continue to collect and count #2 HDPE recyclable plastic. Common items: milk jugs, shampoo bottles, water/soda bottle caps, and detergent containers.
- Web addresses for [Altrusa International](#), [District Three](#), and [Ocala](#)

The Benediction was recited, and the meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Desserts were passed.

**BIRTHDAYS:** TJ Bright – December 1, Jennifer Ruppel – December 3, Mary Cay Landt – December 22, Ann McKenzie – December 31

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Diane Barrineau, TJ Bright, Debbie Catabia, Colleen Duris, Frances Ferguson, Brenda Ford, Elaine Goodelle, Gloria James, Maria Kusmierz, Mary Cay Landt, Connie Larsen, Becky Long, Helen McDavid, Ann McKenzie, Scott Tice, Maclyn Walker, Wendy Williams, and Anita Winter

Submitted by Wendy Williams

## Board Action

In November a report was made on the Canterfield Celebration by the Cluster Club at Canterfield, the Day of Giving successful diaper collection and wrapping, more information was provided on the holiday family gifts and Arnette House, and items needed for Operation Christmas dinner.

At the December meeting the Board heard about the Long Range Planning Committee's approval of the library entrance project for \$14,000. Final arrangements were discussed for all the holiday related service projects and a plan was in formation for collecting the recyclables.

In January, the Board discussed the final agreement with the library for the entrance project, preparation for Add-An\_Altrusan Day, and the need for volunteers for the club nominating committee.

# MINUTES

## Altrusa International of Ocala, Inc. Business Meeting Minutes January 8, 2026

The meeting was held at Braised Onion.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 12:07 p.m. by President Helen McDavid.

The Altrusa Grace and Pledge of Allegiance were recited.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Becky Long introduced Heather Gilardi and Heather Goodall.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The December Business Meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**CORRESPONDENCE – Elaine Goodelle:** An invoice from Dr. Lentsch's office was received. The Public Education Foundation of Marion County sent an invitation to the Golden Apple Gala on Saturday, January 31 where the Teacher of the Year will be announced. Colleen Duris read the thank you card from Kate Fink for the donations in support of Operation Christmas Dinner.

**TREASURER'S REPORT – Scott Tice:** Invoices were sent out earlier this week.

**AL T. RUSA – Becky Long:** \$30.43 balance plus additional donations received today.

**RAFFLE:** This month's raffle prize was donated by Angie Dansby. Scott Tice won.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**ASTRA – TJ Bright:** Has emailed West Port High School ASTRA club for an update. Helen saw on Instagram that they participated in a Christmas parade.

**Care:** Cards were passed for Val Foster and Betty Cluster. Helen reported that Val is in rehab following another stroke. Brenda saw Angie over the holidays, and she was in good spirits following her knee surgery.

**Cluster/Fundraising:** Helen directed members to the Trivia Night reminders at the bottom of the Agenda.

**Long Range Planning – Connie Larsen:** The Library sent an agreement for the Foundation to approve.

The Business meeting was paused while the Foundation considered a motion to approve the Agreement. The Business meeting resumed immediately thereafter.

The Long Range Planning Committee is meeting at noon on Tuesday to discuss additional plans.

**Membership – Becky Long:** Two prospective members were in attendance. There will be a membership table at Trivia Night.

**Newsletter – Colleen Duris:** February 20 is the submission deadline for the next newsletter.

**Program – Gloria James/Ann McKenzie:** Maclyn Walker announced Courtney Morris, Marion County Public Schools' 2025 Rookie Teacher of the Year and Altrusa Teacher To Be grant recipient, will be our February guest speaker.

**Service – Debbie Catabia:** Food was delivered for Operation Christmas Dinner. Christmas presents were delivered to the Arnette House families. We learned when we delivered the presents that the family did not reside in Marion County. Next year we will specify that we want to support a Marion County family. Ann



# MINUTES

McKenzie's husband is a contact for Community with a Heart, and we will connect with him for future service options.

**Web/Social Media – Helen McDavid:** Everything is running smoothly.

**FOUNDATION REPORT – Maclyn Walker:** The Foundation approved the revised Library agreement for the children's entranceway project.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Helen requested volunteers for the Nominating Committee, specifying that at least three past presidents were needed. Colleen confirmed that as current president, Helen was not eligible. Gloria James, Maria Kusmierz, and Debbie Catabia volunteered.

**PROGRAM:** Becky Long provided an Add An Altrusan and Re-Orientation presentation.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/HAPPY BUCKS:

- Helen announced Maclyn Walker as the December NINJA for being quietly active. Maclyn has been the library contact for the children's entranceway project and coordinates our monthly lunch orders.
- Happy Bucks are an opportunity for members to share news. Funds support the club.
  - Helen McDavid shared that her son Dalton received a promotion. He is now a treasury analyst overseeing five staff. This is his first management position.
  - Mary Cay Landt shared the sad news that a homicide occurred five blocks from her home yesterday. Whit Harper was shot while gardening in his yard. Prayers are requested for his family.
  - Mary Cay did not go to the Gator basketball game Tuesday (she was under the weather). They won, and she received several texts telling her she was missed but not to come anymore since they win when she's not there!
  - Becky Long shared that her grandson has a new corgi puppy. Her grandson also won the Elks Soccer Shoot Out competition and will be advancing to the next level.

## REMINDERS:

- [Track your volunteer hours.](#)
- Board Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at noon via Zoom.
- Business Meetings are the second Thursday of each month at noon at Braised Onion.
- Cluster Club meets the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. The January 15 meeting is at the Early Learning Coalition, 2300 SW 17<sup>th</sup> Rd., Ocala.
- Trivia Night is March 7, 6 p.m. at the Country Club of Ocala, 6823 SE 12<sup>th</sup> Cir., Ocala. Sponsor Commitment Forms are due to Connie and Kate by January 31. Send sponsorship money to Connie and raffle basket names to Kate.
- Web addresses for [Altrusa International](#), [District Three](#), and [Ocala](#)

The Benediction was recited, and the meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Judi Zanetti January 13; Wendy Williams January 19

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Diane Barrineau, Janet Behnke, TJ Bright, Debbie Catabia, Colleen Duris, Karen Elliott, Frances Ferguson, Brenda Ford, Elaine Goodelle, Gloria James, Maria Kusmierz, Mary Cay Landt, Connie Larsen, Becky Long, Helen McDavid, Ann McKenzie, Scott Tice, Maclyn Walker, Wendy Williams, and Anita Winter

Submitted by Wendy Williams



# MINUTES

Altrusa International of Ocala, FL Inc.  
*Cluster Club Meeting Minutes*  
January 15, 2026  
Early Learning Coalition, 6pm  
2300 SW 17<sup>th</sup> Rd., Ocala, FL

The meeting was called to order by Judi Zanetti at 6:04pm and everyone in attendance recited the Altrusa Grace followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the November 20, 2025 meeting were approved.

## **Business Meeting recap:**

**Correspondence:** Interfaith, Golden Apple Invite & Dr. Lynch invoices.

**Treasurer:** Scott reported invoices have been sent and next billing will be the April and it is the annual dues.

**Program Recap:** Add-An-Altrusan and Re-Orienting of Members presented by Becky Long. Becky presented the presentation for the Cluster Club members. It contained lots of information on Altrusa from the International, District and Club level.

**ASTRA:** TJ Bright is back as Chair of the committee. The West Port high school students participated in the schools Xmas parade. The school sponsor, Eleanor Gilliam's daughter, is a Golden Apple teacher recipient this year.

**Cluster/Fundraising:** Sponsorships are coming in. Kate and Wendy are working on the program through Canva and Connie said she would send them last year's for reference. Judi will be meeting with AmFund for information on promoting the vacation packages, Wendy will be "trained" by AmFund on what to tell people at the event related to the trips. Colleen will sit in on the training so we have a backup. Connie will contact the new Country Club owners to confirm matters. Colleen will submit for the liability insurance coverage from International. A general discussion was held related to tickets, sales and marketing. Judi and Kevin are pulling the Trivia together. The group is donating two raffle baskets: "Fun in the Sun" and A Day on the Water". All will bring items to the next meeting and we will compile the baskets.

**Membership:** We had two guests and our day club meeting, the two Heathers from Advent Health NICU that spoke to us in November. Becky is in contact with them on potential membership and service project.

**Web/Social Media:** All is good.

**Care:** Val Forster will be out of rehab soon and returning to her assisted living facility. Angie Dansby is recovering well from knee surgery.

**Long Range Planning:** The committee finalized the Memorandum of Understanding with the library to move forward on Freedom Library children's room entryway project. The club members have collected 1,475 recyclables for the Nancy Jones Buddy Bench and we are waiting to hear back from South Ocala Elementary to see if they will join us in the project. Thanks to the Cluster Club members that collected, a picture was taken.

**Newsletter:** Deadline is February 20, 2026.

**Service:** The Holiday Family, Arnette House Closet & Operation Christmas Dinner turned out to be great successes. We did discover when the family gifts were delivered that the family was actually from Lake County. We have notified Arnette House that next year we would like a Marion County family.

Helen notified everyone that the club nominating committee has been appointed and if you are called, please say YES! (the committee is Debbie Catabia, Gloria James and Maria Kusmierz)

The December NINJA was Becky Long for stepping in and handling matters while Helen was with her sister and brother-in-law. The January NINJA was Maclyn Walker for her quiet activeness. She has taken a big lead on the library project and handles the lunch orders each month.

**Happy Bucks:** Helen is looking forward to her sister's beach trip for the month of February.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm with all members reciting the Altrusa Benediction

**Attendance:** Judi Zanetti, Wendy Williams, Amanda White, Scott Tice, Elaine Goodelle, Becky Long, Kate Fink, Connie Larsen, Colleen Duris, Helen McDavid and Brenda Ford.

