



Altrusa International of Plymouth County, Massachusetts, Inc.

The Cranberry Scoop

Altrusa is an international nonprofit organization, making our local communities better through leadership, partnership, and service.

December 2023

Motto:
"Leading to a Better
Community"

2022- 23 Officers

President
Susan Porazzo

Vice President
Jenn Belcher

Secretary
Joan Osborne

Treasurer
Jan Story

Directors
Barbara Lancissi
Ann Jarvinen
Pat Monteith

Past President
Susan Setterland

Dinner Meetings

1st Thursdays @ Adria's
6 P.M. open menu!

Business Meeting

3rd Wednesdays @ 6 P. M.
Abington Public Library.

Communications Chairs,
Pat Monteith and Jenn Belcher

Newsletter editor,
Lucia Shannon

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year Plymouth County Altrusans!!!

I hope everyone survived the holidays and is ready for a new year and new adventures. There is still much Altrusa business going on. I hope everyone will mark their calendars for April 26-28 for Spring Conference at the Doubletree in North Andover MA. The Seacoast club is so anxious to host us and looking forward to the fun activities being planned. The hotel is very nice and don't forget, they offer a warm chocolate chip cookie every night.

I know some of our Altrusans are heading south for some rest and to get away from our lovely winter weather. I hope they enjoy themselves and bring back some new ideas for the club.

Rita has asked if we would be willing to be the host club for Spring Conference 2025. We are finalizing the location but unfortunately no hotel in Plymouth was willing to work with us on budget. It's unfortunate but all too familiar to our club. I do plan on speaking with the Quincy club about helping us so do not feel we will be in this ourselves. District will always ensure we have successful Conferences.

The Service Committee for International is continuing their work and it reminds me that we need to begin considering which projects to submit for District One awards. All submissions are due by March 15th so put your thinking caps on.

I look forward to seeing most of you in February at our business meeting on Wednesday 2/21 at 6 PM.

In service,
Sue

Altrusan Chronicles

Highlights and recommendations from our members on books, restaurants, travel, and more.

Altrusa of Plymouth County board member Pat Monteith has been mentoring a local student, Yvangi Jacques of Brockton, MA (he attends Avon Middle-High School) for the past four years with his science fair projects that have earned him almost \$7,000 in awards. When Pat encouraged him to apply for a QuestBridge scholarship, she had no idea he would end up with a full four-year scholarship including tuition, room & board, fees and books to Ivy League Dartmouth College. Congratulations to all!

Joan Osborne has sent us her welcome yearly invitation to get Girl Scout cookies from an Altrusan grandmother's home! Susan Porazzo and I got our cartons the Friday before the storm.



The Mamie L. Bass Service submissions are due March 15th Susan would like the club to begin thinking now about what to submit. The Mamie L. Bass Community Service Award was established by the International Board of Directors in July 1963, as a memorial to the first National President of Altrusa. The name was changed to the Mamie L. Bass Service Award by the International Board of Directors in July 1975. Here is the link to the Awards site on International [Service – Altrusa International Member Area](#)



Massachusetts Center for the Book has posted their 2024 Reading Challenge. If you'd like to participate with their online challenge, you can submit here: <https://www.massbook.org/readingchallenge> , or just have fun on your own with discovering new reads.

To Absent Friends and Family

Roger Leslie, Husband

Edna DiGiampietro, Mother

John Kenneth Browne, Friend

Altrusans Getting It Done



Christmas Wrap Party, December 7 at Adria's left to right: Pat Monteith, Susannah Leslie, Sandra Drea, Ann Jarvinen, Joan Osborne, Susan Porazzo, Jenn Belcher, Jenn Roffey, Kim Derosier, Jan Story, and Lucia Shannon. Adria's McKenna photographs us again!



President Sue Porazzo, Secretary Joan Osborne, and Vice President Jenn Belcher pack the teen novels for the STARR teens holiday celebration.



Packing up the stockings: Sandra Drea, Jenn Roffey with Kim Desrosier our newest member sponsored by Jenn!



Ann Jarvinen, Susannah Leslie, Janet Story, and Joan Osborne with all the gifts for 6 girls and 3 boys in the STARR residence. Ann introduced us to this service project ten years ago.



December 14, 2023,

Susannah Leslie and Lucia Shannon delivered the gifts to the STARR residence. Two young teens and the Weymouth director, Maria Melpignano greeted us and helped us bring in the bags and packages. For privacy reasons personal photos were not encouraged.

In 2013 the Service Committee proposed changing our annual Christmas project from families to teens. Ann Jarvinen, with former member Sheila Blake, indicated that teens in crisis are often overlooked during the Christmas season. Ann learned of the STARR program from a co-worker at South Shore Hospital and a connection was made with Director Scott Thompson who ran the Plymouth location at the time. The club unanimously voted for the new project. Knowing that teens would now have something to open on Christmas Day, all members embraced this project and were excited to shop for gifts. Ten years later, the same spirit endures. Over the years, modifications were made to accommodate social changes, particularly covid. Both new and old members have added an Amazon account to involve interested donors from the public, streamlined the shopping, and yet maintained the joy of giving.

News from Jou Nouvo's CEO and Former Altrusan, Kerline Tofuri

"We are delighted and proud to introduce our new Program Director, Lynn Balmir, formerly the Manager of our Girls' Scholar Program. Lynn is an enthusiastic, mission-driven leader who has successfully managed the GSP program since its inception. She was instrumental in designing this program to reduce the high school dropout rate among young girls in Bon Repos. She has led a group of volunteer tutors and established partnerships with local leaders to support the girls in their education and provide the mentoring they need to develop. Two years later, under Lynn's leadership, despite challenges and disruption, we have supported over 110 girls through GSP and maintained a 100% graduation rate.

Despite indescribable acts of violence affecting all genders and widespread fear in the neighborhoods, our center remained open, providing crucial services. Meaningful discussions took place at our center, bringing together our program participants and staff. We conducted workshops for program participants and provided various trainings for our staff. Despite families being forced to leave their homes in Bon-Repos, the majority of our children continue to attend classes at our partner schools.

Our center remains a beacon of hope in the Bon-Repos community, serving as a safe gathering place for girls, women, staff, university students, and all the families we are honored to support. We rely on your continued support to navigate the challenges ahead. Since we began our series of 1-hour virtual sessions last month with our Development Officer, Nikenson Romage, to update our supporters and friends on Jou Nouvo's progress in Bon Repos, the response to our invitation has been enthusiastic, and we are grateful for the opportunity to connect with more people moved by our mission."

Lynn Balmir, Jou Nouvo's new Program Director



Winter Warming from Pat Monteith



PERFECT FOR A COLD WINTER'S NIGHT - SWEET POTATO SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- ▣ 4 tablespoons butter
- ▣ 2 medium yellow onions, chopped.
- ▣ 1 tablespoon ginger powder
- ▣ 1-pound carrots, peeled and chopped into 1-inch pieces
- ▣ 1½ pounds sweet potatoes (about 2-3 small), peeled and chopped into 1-inch pieces.
- ▣ 8 cups of vegetable broth
- ▣ 1 level teaspoon salt
- ▣ 1 tart yet sweet apple (such as Honeycrisp or Fuji), peeled and chopped.
- ▣ 2 tablespoons honey
- ▣ ½ teaspoon ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, until soft and translucent (about 10 minutes). Don't brown the onions. Add the ginger powder and cook a minute more.
2. Add the carrots, sweet potatoes, vegetable broth and salt and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer over low heat until vegetables are very tender (about 25 minutes). Stir in the apples and honey. Puree the soup in a blender in batches. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and more honey if necessary. If it's too soupy, let it stand for 20 minutes to thicken.
3. Ladle soup into bowls (and I always sprinkle with more ginger powder).

UPCOMING EVENTS

**No meetings in January, and no dinner meeting in February.
We are flipping the calendar! More meetings this summer.**

**Business Meeting: February 21, 2024, 6 P.M.
Abington Public Library, Abington**

**Dinner Meeting: March 7, 2024, 6 P.M.
Adria's, East Bridgewater**