



Central Breeze

Altrusa International of Central CT, Inc.

Volume 26, Issue 01

January 2026

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Central CT, Inc.
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Meetings
2nd and 4th Wed.
Wadsworth Glen
starting at 6:30 pm.

Presidential Prose

Dear Altrusans,

December has been a wonderfully busy month for our club. For a small organization, Altrusa of Middletown continues to make a meaningful impact in our community — and that is entirely because of you. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and generosity to keep the Altrusa name thriving throughout Middletown and Connecticut.



Our annual raffle was a great success. Together, we sold more than 600 tickets, secured generous donations, and raised funds for our Foundation. The drawing was witnessed by five Altrusans, and all tickets—sold and unsold—were carefully accounted for. Many thanks to Lynne for coordinating this effort and to everyone who helped make it such a success.

Following the drawing, we enjoyed a lovely holiday gathering at Cathy's home. Good food, warm conversation, and shared gratitude made for a truly special evening. Thank you, Cathy, for opening your heart and home to our club.

Our service projects continue to reflect the spirit of Altrusa. Kathleen, Virginia, Suzanne and Linda took their turns reading to Kindergarten students at Spencer School. The children are so precious and truly enjoy reading time with Altrusa volunteers. Linda joined the Civitan Club of Middletown for Holiday on Main service project. Our members donated 188 pounds of food, seasonings, and essential items through our "Seasonings Greetings" drive, which were enthusiastically received by Food Pantry Manager Brenda Reilly. In addition, Cathy and Virginia delivered handmade afghans and personal items to the Nicholas A. Madaras Home in Bridgeport, bringing comfort and holiday cheer to our female veterans.

As we look ahead to the new year, we are excited to begin planning our Poetry Contest and High School Senior Community Service Awards. I hope to meet in person on Wednesday, January 14, at Wadsworth Glen, weather permitting.

During this holiday season, I encourage you to spend time with loved ones and take moments to care for yourself. Thank you for your continued support, generosity, and dedication to service.

Warm regards,
Linda

Upcoming EVENTS

Jan 14 Business meeting at Wadsworth Glen on 30 Boston Road Middletown, CT 6:30pm

Jan 28 Program meeting TBD

Feb 11 Business meeting at Wadsworth Glen at 6:30pm

SAVE THESE DATES:

District One Conference April 24-26, 2026

Altrusa International Convention July 21–24 2027 Columbus, Ohio

Altrusa Accent at Upcoming Meetings

January 14	Suzanne Morello
February 11	Pat Jackowski
March 11	Hilda Schmidt
April 8	Liz Brantley
May 13	Virginia Townes

NOTE: If the scheduled member is unable to present, please create your accent and ask someone else to read it at the meeting or swap dates. ☺



MEMBER MEETING

Breakfast

January – None scheduled this month. At Sheraton Hartford South Hotel on 100 Capital Blvd in Rocky Hill from 7-9am.

SAVE THE DATE: March 16 - Geno Auriemma, UConn Women's Head Basketball Coach

Events

January 15 – Identity Theft Prevention for Older Adults at Chelsea- Groton Savings Bank on 1319 Gold Star Highway in Groton, CT from 12:00pm – 1:00pm

Business After Work

January 28 – Powder Ridge Mountain Park & Resort at The Ridge in Middlefield, CT 5:00 – 7:00pm

Birthday Wishes

Suzanne Morello January 13



United Nations January 2026 Observances

January 2026 is set to be a month of global awareness and observance of various UN events. Here are some of the key UN celebrations and observances that will take place this January:

1. **Global Family Day:** January 1, to honor all families across the globe.
2. **World Braille Day:** January 4, to honor Louis Braille and promote accessibility for visually impaired individuals.
3. **National Youth Day:** January 12, to honor the youth of the world and celebrate the upcoming generation.
4. **International Mentoring Day:** January 17, part of National Mentoring Month, celebrating the power of mentoring and guidance.
5. **Korean American Day:** January 13, 2026, recognizing the contributions of Korean Americans and the arrival of the first Korean immigrants to the US.
6. **Martin Luther King Jr. Day:** January 19, is a US federal holiday honoring the civil rights leader's legacy, observed on the third Monday of January.
7. **National Geographic Day:** January 27, 2026, to honor the over 100-year legacy of the foundation of the **National Geographic Society**, one of the most renowned organizations in the fields of **science, exploration, and environmental conservation**.

These observances provide an opportunity to engage in discussions and actions that promote peace, culture, youth, history, education, democracy, and sustainability. They also serve as a reminder of the importance of global solidarity and support for various causes.

Pat Jackowski

Spencer School Reading Update

Reading at Spencer School has really taken off. Chris Newton's Kindergarten Preparatory Academy (KPA) class has embraced our readers and have really shown us how much children respond to books. In addition to reading, we assisted at the Scholastic Book Sale hosted by the Spencer School PTA where we assisted children from all grade levels pick out and find books, completed wish lists to take home and budget money given to them by their parent/guardian. The PTA has already asked us to return for the spring sale. Kindly, we received \$20 in Scholastic Dollars and they were used to purchase some bilingual books for our book give away events. (My apologies for not providing pictures with this update – Stay tuned for February)

Pat Jackowski



Raffle Wrap-up

Five members met on Wednesday, December 10 at Wadsworth Glen to pull the winning raffle tickets. ALMOST everyone who sold tickets had a winner! (Sorry for those who did not.) Congratulations to all the winners.

We realized a profit of \$2971.63 from raffle sales and donations of \$550. (and we expect the \$500 gift to be matched!) That's pretty awesome results for all our hard work. Remember this is the ONLY fundraiser that we do to support ALL our wonderful projects.

Thank you for your donations, collections, sales, and follow-through on this project. It takes a village, and we have a mighty busy bunch of Altrusans!

Linda Ring



Left to Right: Hilda Schmidt, Virginia Townes, Pat Jackowski, and Lynne Havlicek.



Priz	Val	Business	Winning ticket	Name	Who sold this ticket?
			Numbr		
1	\$600	Newport Get Away	277	Jean Newman	P.Jackowski
2	\$150	The Bushnell	184	Karen Ruder	K.Didato
3	\$100	Il Gusto	689	Alissa Rybicki	E.Mathews
4	\$50	Butcher Bro's Steakhouse	549	Hilda Schmidt	H.Schmidt
5	\$50	Carbone's Prime	641	Charles Jackowski	P.Jackowski
6	\$50	Great Taste Chinese	133	Georgianne Leone	K.Didato
7	\$50	Illiano's Pizza #1	033	Cathy Boone	C.Boone
8	\$50	Parisian Salon #1	596	Bob Stevens	D.Stevens
9	\$50	Viron Rondo Osteria	110	Jennifer Mickey	B.Crosswell
10	\$35	Bella'Gia Ristorante	010	Cathy Boone	C.Boone
11	\$50	Illiano's Pizza #2	427	Rosaria Pock	L.Ring
12	\$50	Illiano's Pizza #3	305	Julia Hopkins	E.Mathews
13	\$50	Illiano's Pizza #4	030	R.Boone	C.Boone
14	\$50	Illiano's Pizza #5	472	Johanna Bond	J.Santaniello
15	\$50	Parisian Salon #2	209	Lynne Havlicek	L.Havlicek
16	\$30	George's Pizza	119	Betsy Crosswell	B.Crosswell
17	\$30	Vespucci's Restaurant	569	Joyce Rankins	D.Stevens
18	\$25	Amato Toys & Hobby	206	Lynne Havlicek	L.Havlicek
19	\$25	Bella Notte	573	Tressa Spears Jackson	D.Stevens
20	\$25	Big Y	508	Jeremy Kraft	J.Santaniello
21	\$25	Brew Bakers	520	Eileen Black	J.Santaniello
22	\$25	Cava Restaurant	282	Angela Slocum	E.Mathews
23	\$25	Cheshire Pizza	488	Jennifer Kahn	J.Santaniello
24	\$25	E.G. Salon #1	521	Hilda Schmidt	H.Schmidt
25	\$25	E.G. Salon #2	494	Diane Buchanan	J.Santaniello
26	\$25	Esca Restaurant	271	Ann Lindner	P.Jackowski
27	\$25	Fiore II Restaurant	444	Steve Ciskowski	J.Santaniello
28	\$25	Luce Restaurant	338	Rachel McGovern	E.Mathews
29	\$25	Market 32	496	Diane Buchanan	J.Santaniello
30	\$25	Mondo	553	Heather Fitzgerald	H.Schmidt
31	\$25	New Mill Restaurant	289	Greta Gribkoff	E.Mathews
32	\$25	Pocket Full of Posies	041	Liz Brantley	L.Brantley
33	\$25	R.J. Julia Bookstore	211	Lynne Havlicek	L.Havlicek
34	\$25	Seven Moons Thai	523	Joanna Baldwin	H.Schmidt
35	\$25	Sicily	586	Thomas Byrd	D.Stevens
36	\$25	Sweet Jean's Café	003	R.Boone	C.Boone
37	\$25	Texas Roadhouse	489	Gabriela Self	J.Santaniello

Holiday Party 2025

Cathy's home glowed with the quiet magic of the season, every room beautifully decorated in a way that felt both festive and warmly inviting. Soft lights, thoughtful touches, and the unmistakable feeling of care set the stage for a holiday party that was less about spectacle and more about togetherness.

The table was a celebration all its own. We lingered over plates of salad and spinach stuffed shells, already hoping Cathy might share the recipe. A rich yule log, delicate cheesecake squares, and an irresistible assortment of Italian cookies rounded out the spread. The food didn't just nourish—it sparked stories, laughter, and shared memories.

One of the evening's highlights was that even Barbara A. was able to attend, making the gathering feel especially complete. Her presence added to the joy and reminded everyone how meaningful it is when all can come together.

Thank you, Cathy, for opening your heart and your home for our holiday gathering!

Linda Ring



Stuffed Shells Florentine recipe

30 jumbo pasta shells (You should be able to stuff this many, but want to cook a few extras for those that break)

1 1/2 TBSP olive oil

1 large egg

2 tsp fresh garlic, minced

1 TBSP fresh basil finely chopped

4 cups (packed) spinach leaves, roughly chopped

1 tsp kosher salt

12 oz ricotta cheese

1/2 tsp black pepper

1 Cup grated Mozzarella cheese

1/2 Cup grated Parmesan cheese, more for serving

1 jar marinara sauce

1. Cook the pasta al dente. Drain and spread on baking sheet. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

2. Heat the oil in large skillet over medium heat, when oil starts to shimmer add the garlic and cook about a minute.

 Add spinach and cook, stirring occasionally until leaves begin to wilt but are still bright green--3-4 minutes.

 Remove from heat and let cool.

3. In a mixing bowl, stir together spinach, ricotta, Mozzarella, Parmesan, egg, basil and salt and pepper until thoroughly combined.

 Pour 3/4 cup of sauce in bottom of shallow 11X13 baking dish.

 Stuff each pasta shell with the spinach ricotta mixture and place in baking dish.

4. Cover with remaining sauce and bake covered with aluminum foil for 25 minutes. Remove foil and continue baking until top begins to brown and sauce is bubbling, another 10-12 minutes. Dust with parmesan to serve.

Cathy Boone

Seasonings Greetings – Donations to Amazing Grace Food Pantry

Altrusa International of Central CT, Inc. made their annual donation of "Seasonings Greetings" to Amazing Grace Food Pantry. We collected/purchased 188 pounds of Seasonings/Spices, Dressings and other foods this month.

Linda Ring



Girls Love Mail

Dear Linda,

Our thanks to you and your group for your Girls Love Mail contribution! We received your package and are excited to get your kind words out to a woman in need. We appreciate you organizing everyone together to help GLM!

"Giving out the letters touches my heart. I get hugs, tears, smiles, and gratitude from our patients!" - Deana V., Oncology Nurse

Again, thank you for your hard work and please pass along our gratitude to all of the letter writers. Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Best,

Nancy

Nancy Shaw, Volunteer Coordinator

Holiday on Main

Altrusa had an opportunity to collaborate with Civitan Club of Middletown selling hot chocolate, warm pretzels and fresh popcorn for the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce. The day started out snowy, dewy, and quite a mess. Luckily, by 11 am, the snow had stopped, and business picked up! Warm pretzels were the hit of the day. I think it really helps that we are posted right next to the 'hayride' entry!

Thank you Civitans for giving me the opportunity to join you in serving our Middlesex Chamber of Commerce!

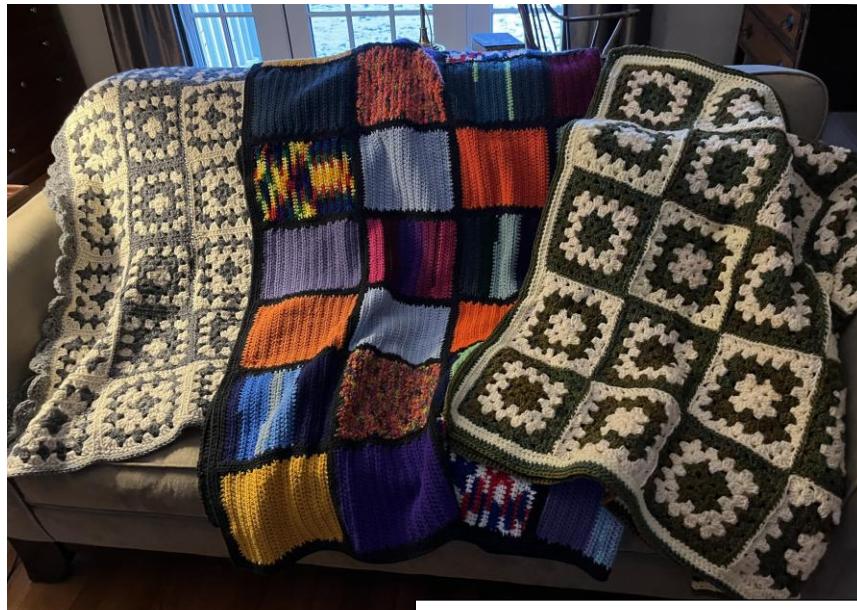
Linda Ring



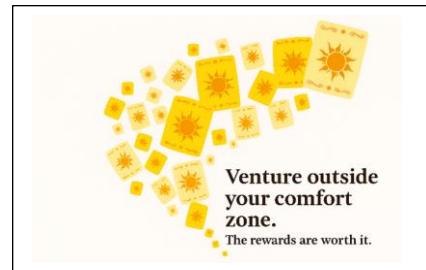
Blankets of Warmth for the Veterans

On December 22, Virginia hooked up the sleigh and, with Cathy along, headed to Bridgeport to the PFC Nicholas A Madaras House for women veterans. We brought along 10 gift bags for the residents—each with a handmade afghan and a bag of personal products—body lotions, Dove soap, mists and chap sticks. There was also a gift bag for the only child living at the house (an eight-year-old girl) filled with gifts that Virginia bought just for her—including an adorable hat, scarf and glove set and a squishy pillow doll. We met with the current director of the facility and some of the residents and spent a little time just chatting. The pictures are of three of the afghans and of the gift bags under the house's Christmas tree.

Cathy Boone



January President's Message



Happy New Year!

We now have 2025 in the books and onto 2026. This has been such an exciting and busy year for me, and I am sure for many of you. From the fun of Spring Conference to the absolute beauty of Quebec during Convention to Fall Workshop and my many club visits. I enjoyed every minute and look forward to what next year will bring.

I hope the clubs enjoyed their holiday season, from the many posts on Facebook it certainly looked like it. Our January DSB will focus on the upcoming Spring Conference. The board and I are putting the finishing touches on the agenda. We hope everyone has made time in their schedules to attend.

We are at the point in the Altrusa year where new members pay ½ year dues. Please continue to use this as a selling point for potential new members. Many clubs have added to their membership and hopefully they will join us as well at Spring Conference. Thank you for the opportunity to be your Governor. District One is the place to be for supporting our communities, building lifelong friendships and providing leadership opportunities.

In service,
Susan, Governor District One

Reminder on navigating the web...

Where can you find more information about District One? <https://districtone.altrusa.org/>

Where can you find more information about Altrusa International? <https://www.altrusa.org/>

www.altrusastore.com (purchase Altrusa branded items including pins and banners)

Give International some feedback and share your thoughts on improving Altrusa with the [Suggestion Box](#).

If you have forgotten your password to the site please send an e-mail to Altrusa@altrusa.org or call the International Office for assistance.

Altrusa international Foundation (excerpt from November 2025 volume 20 of The Impact)

Just What Is the Lamplighter Program?

The International Foundation is grateful for the level of support from Altrusans who make the Lamplighter giving series possible. The Lamplighter Program began in 1987 to recognize Altrusans who contribute or on whose behalf \$500 or more to the International Foundation on an annual basis. Lamplighter members receive a gold pin upon their first gift, then a diamond is awarded for each subsequent \$500 yearly gift. The pin can accommodate 24 diamonds. An Altrusa Club or District may also become a Foundation Lamplighter with a \$500 contribution. The Altrusa Club or District receives a Lamplighter patch for their banner upon the initial contribution and a special pin for each yearly donation thereafter acknowledging their status.

KENNEDY'S CORNER



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