

**Altrusa International of
Central CT, Inc.**

P.O. Box 2532
Middletown, CT 06457

Altrusa.CentralCT@gmail.com

President

Linda Ring
860-490-8211

Vice-President

Vacant

Secretary

Lynne Havlicek
860-306-5110

Treasurers

Pat Jackowski (General)
860-638-8018
Hilda Schmidt (Foundation)
203-592-4819

Director

Elsie Mathews
860-841-9375

Past President

Lynne Havlicek
860-306-5110

Newsletter Editor

Elsie Mathews
860-841-9375

Meetings

2nd and 4th Wed.
Wadsworth Glen
starting at 6:30 pm.

Presidential Prose

Well... February certainly made sure we didn't forget what winter in Connecticut looks like! Between snowstorms and slippery sidewalks, Mother Nature had other plans for our gathering. Thankfully, Zoom saved the day once again and allowed us to stay connected from the comfort (and warmth) of home – snow boots optional.

A sincere thank you to our District Visitor, Barbara Leavey, for joining our February meeting and sharing District updates and encouragement. We truly appreciated you spending the evening with us and helping us feel connected to the larger Altrusa family.

It was with sadness that we accepted Liz Brantley's resignation, effective March 1st. Liz has been a valued part of our club, and we wish her all the best as she focuses on personal commitments. With Liz stepping away, we are looking for someone willing to take on the bottles and cans recycling effort from Luther Ridge. It's a great way to turn empties into impact! Please let me know if you're interested or able to help – bonus points if you don't mind the occasional clatter of returnables.

On happier news, we are excited to welcome Laurie Caraway as our newest member! Laurie's initiation will take place at our April 8 business meeting – perfectly timed for Add-An-Altrusan Month in April. What better way to celebrate than welcoming a new friend into service?

A few friendly reminders as spring approaches (whether the weather agrees or not):

- Taxes are due April 15 – yes, already!
- It's time to register and reserve your room for District Conference, May 1-3, 2026, in Nashua. This year's theme, Lighting the Way for Leadership, promises inspiration, fellowship, and plenty of Altrusan energy. Conferences are always more fun when we attend together!
- Be sure to mark your calendars for our Poetry Reception on April 18, one of our favorite events of the year and always filled with creativity, inspiration, and wonderful community spirit.
- Our Scholarship Committee has sent out announcements, and applications will soon be arriving. If you're interested in helping select this year's recipient, please reach out to Elsie. It's a rewarding opportunity – and a wonderful reminder of why we do what we do.

Thank you all for your flexibility, dedication, and good humor during these winter months. Snowstorms may slow us down, but they never stop Altrusans for long. Here's hoping March brings sunshine, melting snow, and continued opportunities to serve together.

Warmly (pun intended),

Linda





- Mar 7 Joint Service Clubs Luncheon
Casa Mia at The Hawthorne
2421 Berlin Tpke
Berlin, CT
- Mar 11 Business meeting in-person/Zoom
at Wadsworth Glenn at 6:30pm
- Mar 25 Program meeting TBD

SAVE THESE DATES:

District One Spring Conference
May 1-3, 2026
Nashua, NH

District One Fall Workshop
November 14, 2026
Kennebunkport, ME

Altrusa International Convention
July 21–24, 2027
Columbus, Ohio



MEMBER MEETING

Breakfast

March 16 – Geno Auriemma, UConn Women's Head Basketball Coach. At Sheraton Hartford South Hotel on 100 Capital Blvd in Rocky Hill from 7-9am.

Events

March 10 – International Women’s Day Event at Courtyard by Marriott on 4 Sebethe Drive in Cromwell, CT from 5-7pm

Business After Work

March –None scheduled.

Next one on April 9 at Toyota Oakdale Theatre on 95 South Turnpike Road in Wallingford. from 5:00 – 7:00pm

Altrusa Accent at Upcoming Meetings

- March 11 Hilda Schmidt
- April 8 Lynne Havlicek
- 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. 😊

Birthday Wishes

- Lynne Havlicek March 15
- Patti Deegan March 16
- Hilda Schmidt March 22
- Liz Brantley March 23



United Nations March 2026 Observances

In March 2026, several important UN observances will take place. 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. The following 2 dates have been highlighted by Altrusa's UN Committee:

March 8 – International Women's Day acknowledges women's achievements and addresses gender gaps. This year's theme highlights women's role in achieving justice. As agents of change, women judges strengthen accountability, bring new perspectives, and in leadership positions can help disrupt collusion and fight corruption.

March 22 – World Water Day raises awareness about the importance of freshwater and sustainable water management. It highlights global issues like water scarcity, pollution, and access to clean drinking water. Organizations, schools, and communities host educational events, campaigns, and conservation projects. The day emphasizes the role of water in health, agriculture, and ecosystems. It encourages responsible use, protection, and innovation to preserve this vital resource. Celebrating the day inspires action for a sustainable water future.

Additionally, there are other days of observance including:

March 3 – World Wildlife Day focuses on biodiversity and conservation efforts. Celebrating the diversity of plants and animals around the globe, it raises awareness of conservation issues and the importance of protecting endangered species. Events often include educational programs, wildlife tours, and campaigns promoting sustainable practices. The day reminds us of the delicate balance of ecosystems and our role in preserving them. Communities and organizations highlight the beauty and value of wildlife. It's a call to action for a greener, more harmonious planet.

March 3 – World Hearing Day raises awareness about hearing loss and deafness to improve ear care globally. The day encourages early screening, treatment, and preventive measures. Health professionals, schools, and communities promote hearing health through workshops and campaigns. It emphasizes that hearing well is essential for communication, education, and social inclusion. The day also highlights support for those using hearing aids or cochlear implants. Overall, it's about better hearing for everyone, everywhere.

March 21 – World Poetry Day celebrates the art of poetry and its ability to inspire, communicate, and evoke emotion. Schools, writers, and communities host readings, workshops, and competitions. The day highlights poetry as a means of expression, storytelling, and cultural preservation. It encourages everyone to explore words, rhythm, and creativity. Celebrating poetry fosters imagination, reflection, and connection across languages and cultures. It's a day to honor the power of verse and literary beauty.

March 21 – World Down's Syndrome Day. On this day, people with Down syndrome and those who live and work with them throughout the world organize and participate in activities and events to raise public awareness and create a single global voice for advocating for the rights, inclusion and wellbeing of people with Down syndrome.

Pat Jackowski

The Why. Questions and Answers about UN Days of Observance

The United Nations (UN) and its related organizations assign specific days during a year to raise awareness about topics of global importance. UN observations are not public holidays.

Spread Awareness and Take Action

UN Days provide stakeholders—nations, non-governmental organizations, and international advocacy groups—a powerful “advocacy tool” to spread awareness and take action on issues affecting millions of lives around the world.

The World Is Interconnected

As technology improves the human condition, it also reveals society’s many fault lines. Issues such as human trafficking, terrorism, and poverty affect the many facets of life and spill over borders.

UN awareness days are an attempt to bring light to these problems and bring together people from all walks of life to collaborate over sustainable solutions. They are also annual reminders of the complexities of some of these issues and that they require a long-term, multi-dimensional resolution.

UN International Years

How Are UN Days Chosen?

Member states can propose awareness or international days to the UN General Assembly, the UN’s main deliberative forum. The General Assembly members then vote on the proposed resolution. If passed, the General Assembly releases a resolution, which is a statement that outlines why the issue is important and what needs to be done.

Some dates are chosen because of their relationship with the issue. For example, Human Rights Day on December 10 honors the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948.

Are UN Awareness Days Public Holidays?

UN Awareness or International Days are generally not public holidays. Some countries, however, may designate some days as public holidays or as national observations. International Women’s Day on March 8, for instance, is a public holiday in many countries. Nelson Mandela Day is an observation in South Africa.

Pat Jackowski



You're never too old,
too wacky, too wild,
to pick up a book
and read to a child



Altrusa International of Albany, Oregon USA

Altrusa Accent from business meeting on February 11, 2026 (by Pat Jackowski)

The International Day of Women and Girls in Science

February holds many important dates and monthly remembrances. One that I've read about since my introduction to the UN at the 2025 International Convention in Quebec is The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated each year on February 11th. Since its proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, the International Day of Women and Girls in Science celebrates the remarkable contributions of women in science and raises awareness that science and gender equality must advance hand-in-hand to address the world's major challenges.

The day reminds us that women and girls should get the same chances as men and boys to study, explore, and build careers in scientific fields. Currently,

- The global average percentage of women researchers is 1 in 3 and less than 10% in some countries
- 35% of STEM graduates are women
- 1 in 10 STEM leaders are women
- 22% of STEM jobs in G20 countries are held by women. The G20 is a forum of the largest economies in the world that meets regularly to discuss the most pressing issues facing the global economy

The 2026 theme, "Synergizing AI, Social Science, STEM and Finance: Building Inclusive Futures for Women and Girls," teaches us that when different fields work together, we can reduce inequality and create better opportunities. This reflects a strategic shift from broad policy recommendations and awareness to showcase concrete good practices and scalable solutions that are already helping to build more inclusive STEM ecosystems worldwide. Let us promise to support women and girls in science and help build a future where talent matters more than gender, thus creating future innovative and capable scientists and leaders.

The Craft that Didn't Happen



The "Craft Night" scheduled for Wednesday, February 25th was cancelled due to the snow. As you can see, we had a spring craft to create. The date will be re-scheduled at our next business meeting on March 11th. Please bring your calendars!

Pat Jackowski

YIKES!! Daylight Saving Time - Sunday, March 8, 2026

Daylight Saving Time marks the practice of setting clocks forward by one hour to extend evening daylight. It helps make better use of daylight, conserve energy, and encourage outdoor activity. People are reminded to adjust clocks, devices, and schedules accordingly. While some enjoy the longer evenings, it can take a few days to adjust sleep patterns. The day emphasizes awareness of time management and seasonal rhythm. It's a small but impactful shift that affects daily routines.

In the US, daylight saving time starts on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday in November, with the time changes taking place at 2:00 a.m. local time. With a mnemonic word play referring to seasons, clocks "spring forward, fall back"—that is, in springtime the clocks are moved forward from 2:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. and in fall they are moved back from 2:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Daylight saving time lasts for a total of 34 weeks (238 days) every year, about 65% of the entire year.

Daylight Saving Time, for the U.S. and its territories, is NOT observed in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands and the state of Arizona, except for the Navajo Indian Reservation. Navajo Nation participates in the Daylight-Saving Time policy, due to its large size and location in three states.

Pat Jackowski

District Visitor - Barbara Leavey at Business Meeting on February 11, 2026



Our meeting attendees when Barb Leavey, District Director, joined our Feb 11th meeting. From L to R: Lynne Havlicek, Linda Ring, Barb Leavey, Elsie Mathews, Hilda Schmidt, Laurie Caraway, Pat Jackowski, Liz Brantley, and Jamie Santaniello (was putting her baby to sleep).

Highlights from Business Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2026

- **Altrusa Accent** – Pat Jackowski

United Nations International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Pat will forward her Accent for publication in the March Central Breeze.

- **HS Senior Community Service Award** (presentation on Wednesday, May 27) – Elsie Mathews, Lynne Havlicek

Contact list has been updated. Deadline extended to April 15th. Article sent to the Cromwell Chronicle.

- **Painted Pots Activity** (Wednesday, Feb 25, 2026) – Pat Jackowski

Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm, Location: 154 Webster Lane, Hosted by Susan. Pat, Liz, Linda, Hilda and maybe Jamie will attend.

- **International Service Committee Zoom meeting** with District Service chairs was on Tuesday, February 10th – Linda R.

There is a new assessment rubric for the Mamie, Letha and Nina Service Awards.

There is an Astra Club service challenge to send Valentine cards and letters to nursing homes.

Dolly Parton Imagination Library provides children ages 1-6 with one book a month. More information will be shared at the Spring Conference.

- **Middletown's Kids Health and Safety Day** (Saturday, May 16) – Pat Jackowski

Time: 10am – 2pm. Pat has sent in our registration and asked if we could have the same location again this year. Due to funding cuts, they are adding a paid sponsorship program. We will consider it for next year. Jamie, Pat, Kathleen, Linda and Lynne are interested in participating in this project.

Hungry Babies: Kathleen shared that AGFP is in need of pull-up diapers. ABC has a great need for formula and girls' clothing 6 months to 2T. Cans for a Cause 500. Donation can be used for these items.

United Nations Support Program: Pat is proposing that we participate as a Club in the United Nations Days of Observance. Many of our existing projects dovetail with the observance days. If there is support from the Club, Pat will write a Grant proposal. A vote will be held after further discussion.

- Virginia's husband, Ray Townes's African American Culture Center display at Keigwin School from 4-8 PM. Grand opening is 2/11. Also open on Feb 13,19,20,25,26 and 27.

- Barbara Leavy thought we have "super" projects and she encouraged members to get involved at the District level.

- Laurie Caraway thanked the Club for allowing her to observe our meeting.

- Linda's husband Ralph is making alligator chip clips on his 3D printer. A possible fundraiser at Conference.

- Cathy B. volunteers as a friend of the library and notes that they need help with Book Sales which are ongoing through the year.

- Linda R. volunteers with VITA and does tax preparation. This is an opportunity to volunteer in the community.

Lynne Havlicek

St. Sebastian's Church Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee once again asked the parishioners to collect baby food, diapers and formula for the month of January. We are so grateful for their support of Altrusa's "Hungry Babies Are Not An Illusion" project. These pictures are of Joseph Carta from the Outreach Committee loading all the items in the truck and of them spread out in my basement. Pictures don't do it justice. There are so many needed products. Joseph Carta and his wife are also a monthly donor to Altrusa for this project. We are truly blessed.

I wrote a letter of gratitude to go into the St. Sebastian's Church bulletin thanking the Outreach Committee and the entire church family letting them know that their generosity lightens the load for struggling parents.

What a difference Altrusa makes!

Kathleen Didato

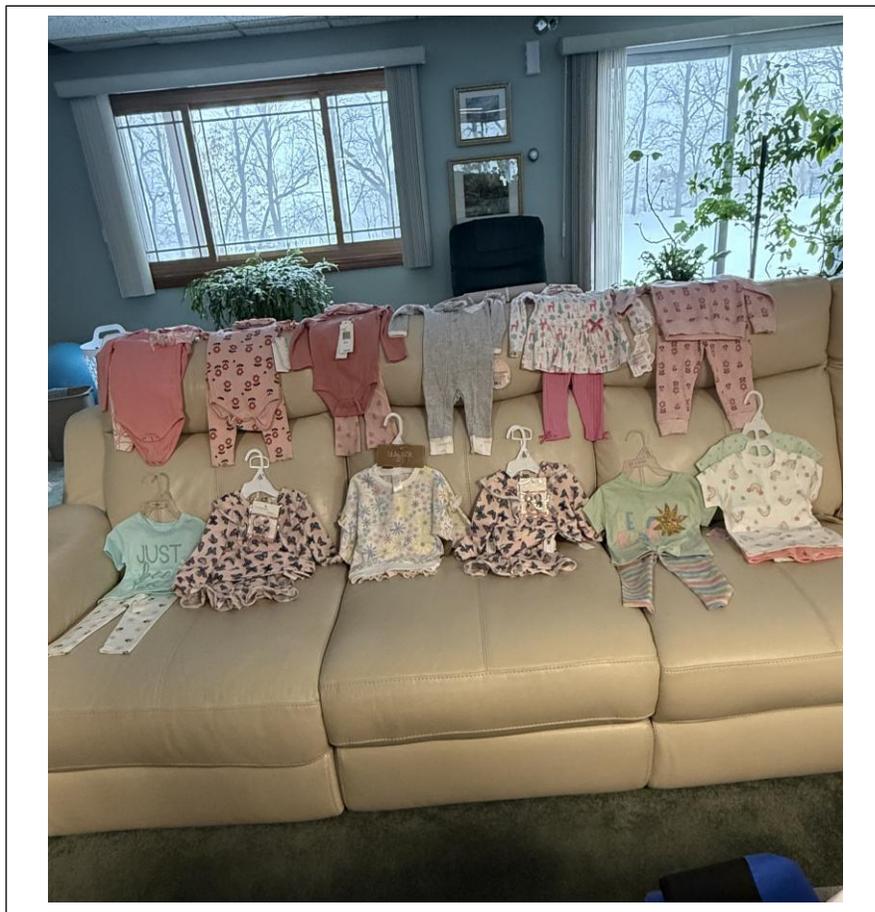


A B C: A Better Choice Women's Center

Anna is the director of ABC Women's Center and when delivering some Similac formula and diapers, she told me she was in need of girls' clothing, size 6 months to 2-toddler. ASAP if I could. Every site I looked, Marshalls, Amazon, the clearance prices were still too expensive. Boscov's flyer said they had girl's clothes on clearance from \$3.99 to \$5.99. I asked my wonderful Altrousan, Bill, to drive me as I cannot yet do that and we hit the jackpot. Altrusa purchased 22 outfits, several with matching headbands. They were originally priced \$22.00/ \$24.00/ and \$36.00. We paid, \$5.99 for each outfit. Bill went to the service desk and got his veteran discount of 15% lowering the cost of each to \$5.09. That's tops, bottoms and most with headband. That is approximately \$594.00 value for a total of \$119.09.

Thanks to Cans 4 a Cause, we have that money already earmarked. Tried to take pictures for you to see. Anna and the ladies at the center were so grateful.

Kathleen Didato



Spencer Readers



Sometimes you wonder if you make a difference. Well, the Spencer Reading Program is making a difference in a dozen children in Mrs. Newton's PKA (Pre-Kindergarten Academy). When I told them of Miss Kathleen's accident, they made the cards shown above to show how much they missed her reading. From lighthouses, hearts and flowers to Spiderman, these beacons of light put a smile on Miss Kathleen's face!

The week of March 9 – 13, our readers will be assisting at the Scholastic Book Fair held in the library. We will assist all grade levels, fielding questions and making sales. Spencer School PTA President, Matasha Bowick sent her thanks for the assist in the Fall Sale and is looking forward to meeting more of the readers at this Spring Sale.

Pat Jackowski

WINTER 2026 in Connecticut



How much snow did you get?

St Patrick's Day
WORD SEARCH

T U U H D V B L A R N E Y E R
 H I A W W U C D D S A I N T L
 M S X H D M B E P D O H O L E
 T H I H C W A L L W V O E I P
 I Z K R I M W R I T Z M P M R
 U M M U I J W M C N I W A E E
 D S H A M R O C K H R C R R C
 T N G Q G B W F B G N A A I H
 T E H C L O V E R V I N D C A
 C E L S D N A L E R I J E K U
 H R O P A T R I C K D T D K N
 A G R A I N B O W G O L D L E
 R D I B U H A R P L U C K T J
 M K O T A T O P Y A D I L O H
 V F T E B I N C D L A R E M E

BLARNEY	GOLD	JIG	PARADE
CELTIC	GREEN	LEPRECHAUN	PATRICK
CHARM	HARP	LIMERICK	POTATO
CLOVER	HOLIDAY	LUCK	RAINBOW
DUBLIN	IRELAND	MARCH	SAINT
EMERALD	IRISH	PARADE	SHAMROCK

© MAPLEPLANNERS.COM

AN IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you,

May the wind always be at your back.

May the sunshine warm upon your face,

The rains fall soft upon your fields and,

Until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm



Notes from the District One Club President's Meeting (02-26-2026)



- International Service Award Criteria were updated in Oct 2025. Be sure you are using the most recent version. In addition, the scoring rubrics are available on the Intl. website.
- Do you think your club attendees would embrace a digital program at Conference? Most presidents thought not.
- Memorial Service updates due to Pat Jackowski by March 15th
- BRR Changes: Any new requests should be sent to Elsie Mathews (BRR Chair) by March 1st
- **Fall Workshop** will be at The Nonantum in Kennebunkport, ME - November 14th. Overnight room cost will be \$249 (includes breakfast for 2).
- **DSB Submissions** – Due March 1
 - Who sends the information to DSB Editor? Usually Newsletter Editor or President.
- Do clubs recognize members with awards, certificates, birthdays, social media? Reply: most do verbal acknowledgements at meetings that are then noted in club minutes.
- Open Forum:
 - Club Archives? You should keep a running file of club officers, projects submitted for District awards (and if it won a prize), etc. Does any club do that? Central CT does.

Linda Ring

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)

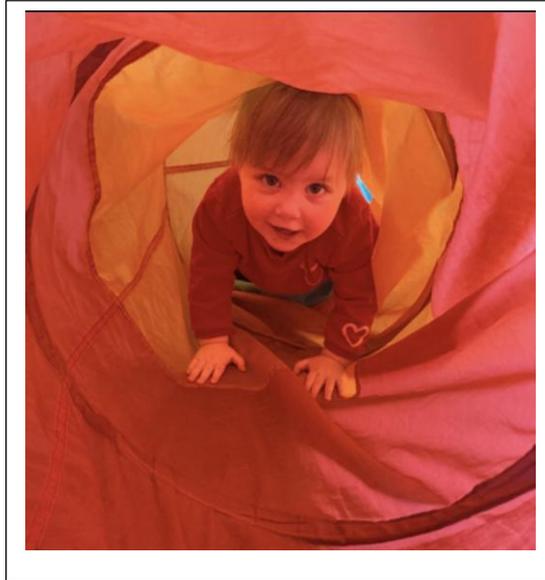
Give International some feedback and share your thoughts on improving Altrusa with the [Suggestion Box](#). If you have forgotten your password to the site please send an e-mail to Altrusa@altrusa.org or call the International Office for assistance.

VIP Lamplighter Reception (from The Impact by Altrusa International Foundation)

Join us at the **2027 VIP Donor Recognition Reception** during the International Convention in Columbus, Ohio, as we honor the incredible generosity of our Lamplighters. This special reception is dedicated to celebrating those who make a lasting impact through their commitment to annual giving during the biennium.

Eligibility is simple: **Altrusans who make a Lamplighter-level donation of \$500 (US) each fiscal year of the biennium (June 1–May 31) are invited to attend.** The Lamplighter Program was created to recognize annual generosity, and this reception is our way of showing our appreciation. Lamplighters are acknowledged in each quarterly Impact newsletter, where we proudly publish the names of those who give during the current biennium. Your generosity fuels our mission, and we are honored to celebrate it together. Questions about your Lamplighter status? Please contact foundation@altrusa.org. We look forward to recognizing you in Columbus!

KENNEDY'S
O
R
N
E
R



Altrusa International of Central CT, Inc.
P.O. Box 2532
Middletown, CT 06457

