



Events Calendar

Business Meeting

Wednesday, October 7th
6:00 PM, Oak Room
Westbrook Community Center
426 Bridge St., Westbrook, ME

Technology Tips Program Meeting

Wednesday, October 21st
6:00 PM
North Deering Tavern
1349 Washington Ave.
Portland, ME

Sue's Supper

Ronald McDonald House
Tuesday, October 20th
(3rd Tuesday of every month)

Empty Bowl Fundraiser

Saturday, October 24th
5 PM - 7 PM
First Lutheran Church
132 Auburn St, Portland, ME

Trivia Night

Wednesday, November 4th
6:00 PM, Oak Room
Westbrook Community Center
426 Bridge St., Westbrook, ME

Business Meeting

Wednesday, November 18th
6:00 PM, Oak Room
Westbrook Community Center
426 Bridge St., Westbrook, ME

DISTRICT ONE WORKSHOP

Saturday, November 14th
Nonantum Resort
95 Ocean Ave.
Kennebunkport, ME

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

As we move through September and into October, I want to take a moment to recognize the many ways our club continues to live out its mission in the community. Your energy, generosity, and commitment make it possible for us to advance literacy and support our neighbors experiencing food insecurity.



Several important community service events are on radar for us as our service year kicks into high gear, and each one offers a meaningful opportunity to serve, connect, and raise support for the causes we care about: Read more detail about these events in the next pages.

- **Restaurant Fundraiser**
- **Calendar Raffle**
- **EMPTY BOWL**

These events succeed because of your dedication. Whether you are helping organize details, selling raffle calendars, inviting guests, volunteering your time, or simply spreading the word, your contributions matter. Together, we are making a visible difference for students, families, and individuals who benefit from our commitment to literacy and food security.

There is also opportunity for fun and celebrating our bond with each other, for members making new friends and reconnecting with old friends. As in the "Awesome Altrusa Antics" event and the "Getting to Know You Fun Night" in the format of "Speed-Dating", as detailed in the following pages.

Thank you for continuing to show up with purpose, kindness, and enthusiasm. I am proud of what we accomplish together and grateful to serve alongside each of you.

With much appreciation,
Debbie Lemieux



ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Leadership

Altrusa Portland Foundation

2025-2027

Martha Gross, Foundation President
grossmartha01@gmail.com

Cathy Paglio, Foundation Director
rpaglio1@gmail.com

Altrusa Portland Club Board

2026 - 2028

Debbie Lemieux, President
dalemieux33@gmail.com

Christine Johnson, Vice President
cejinmaine@gmail.com

Trish Maxim, Secretary
campnaples@fairpoint.net

Pam Lemieux, Treasurer
plemieux4263@gmail.com

Gail Mazzone, Director
mestormy70@gmail.com

Karen Valley, Immed. Past President
book1babe@gmail.com

Anita Chandler, Parliamentarian
achandler@maine.rr.com

Committee Chairpersons

2026 - 2028

Communications Co-Chairs:

Gail Mazzone & Karen Valley

Finance Co-Chairs

Pam Lemieux & Fran Jensen

Membership Co-Chairs:

Trish Maxim & Lee-Ann VanAtta

Service Co-Chairs:

Martha Gross & Cathy Paglio

Program and Event Co-Chairs:

Marie Pike & Ann B. Smith

Member Spotlight

Pam Lemieux

Pam has been a member of the Portland Altrusa Club since 1993. She has held the following positions while an Altrusan: At Club Level, she was Director, Treasurer, Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President. At District Level, she was 2nd Vice Governor, 1st Vice Governor, Governor-Elect, Governor, and Immediate Past Governor.

1. What first prompted you to join?

You mean WHO don't you? My first 'prompt' came from Trish Maxim.

2. What was going on in your work or life when membership became appealing?

At the time, I was working for the phone company, and my circle of friends seemed to consist primarily of 'telephone' people. When I first met the members, I noticed they were 'mature,' very active with projects, and appeared to be in good health. I guessed that they must have found the secret to youth!! And I was right. The secret to youth is SERVICE.

3. What was the moment when you felt, "This membership is worth it"?

I attended an Altrusa International Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico around the turn of the century. There were over 800 members in attendance, and many were dressed in their native attire. My eyes were opened to the fact that Altrusa is far-reaching, service-oriented, and a lot of fun! I shared this experience with Portland Altrusan, Joanne Doherty.

4. Do you have any hobbies?

I have too many hobbies. Including: reading, counted cross-stitch, watercolor, puzzles, card making, Mahjong, etc.

5. What's your go-to comfort food?

Well, LOBSTER! Of course.





ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

District

District Conference

The Portland Club has formed a **2027 District Conference Committee** to assist the District Board. The following individuals have volunteered for the committee: Wanda Pettersen, Debbie Lemieux, Karen Valley, Gail Mazzone, and Ann Smith.

District Workshop

Held annually in the fall, our **District Workshop** is a one-day event that offers valuable information, hands-on workshops, opportunities for idea-sharing, and networking with fellow Altrusans.

The 2026 Fall Workshop will take place at the Nonantum Resort in Kennebunkport, Maine.

Save the date: **Saturday, November 14, 2026.**

International

Literacy Project

The International Literacy Project concludes on November 30th. We will be collecting books during our next two meetings: October 7 and October 21. We are inviting our members to contribute a new or gently used book for children aged 10 to 18 years. Our goal is to collect one book from each member, for a total of 27 books; however, any additional donations would be greatly appreciated! The Service Committee will determine the organization to which to donate the books.

The theme of this year's workshop is "**Keep the Spark Alive**". The workshops will give Clubs a way to discuss and identify ideas to keep current members engaged and help new members feel that they belong with the long-time club members.

Registration (includes buffet lunch):

Early Bird before 11/1 is \$75. Regular Registration is \$80. Day of Workshop is \$85

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/VPVZGUnEz6YEcd8f6>

As the host club, Greater Biddeford-Saco needs children's board books. Please consider bringing a board book to the workshop to contribute to their community service project.

ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

District

Biddeford 50th Celebration

Several clubs were represented at the **Biddeford-Saco club's Birthday celebration of 50 years**. Held at the Oak St. Bistro in Alfred, the weather was accommodating; the dinner and birthday cake were delicious, and the mood was warm and lovely.

In attendance from Portland were Wanda Pettersen, Fran Breton, Ann Babbit, Deb Smith, Trish Maxim, Christine Johnson, Pam Lemieux, Anita Chandler, and Debbie Lemieux. Other clubs attending were the Sanford-Springvale and Seacoast clubs.

Several speakers highlighted the club's accomplishments.



ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Club News

Awesome Altrusa Antics

On August 18th, a group of 25 members from 4 Maine Altrusa Clubs (Portland, Biddeford-Saco, Sanford-Springvale, and Seacoast) enjoyed a beautiful, sunny afternoon of fun conversation, miniature golf, snacks, and ice cream, held at Grammy Rose Dog Rescue & Sanctuary in Acton, Maine. The rescue offered a tour of their facilities for those who were interested. It's an amazing organization and a wonderful recreation area!



September Meeting

District One Governor Susan Porazzo attended the Board and Business Club meetings on September 9th. In her honor, a buffet featuring an array of sandwiches, refreshments, and homemade pickles (special thanks to Karen!) was provided. Additionally, the Club will be making a \$25 donation to a charity of her choice. Thank you, Susan, for making the trip to meet with us!

During the board meeting, Debbie distributed a Membership Challenge 2026–2027 document, aligned with district-level goals, for our review. She will be revising it to ensure greater relevance to our club.

October Birthdays

- 01 Pam Lemieux
- 22 Fran Breton
- 23 Pam Szalajski
- 28 Barbara Weese



ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Club News

Altrusa Accent

The Altrusa Accent is a 3-5 minute talk at the monthly business meeting. It can be about Altrusa history or famous Altrusans. It can be about a poem you read that highlights values and characteristics that are in line with our mission; it could be a topic as far-reaching or as local as you want. The volunteers for the remainder of 2026 are as follows. Please follow up with Debbie if you're willing to volunteer for our 2027 meetings

October- Gail

November- Karen

December- Marie

TRIAD Visit

On September 9, 2026, President Debbie Lemieux and Past President, Karen Valley were guest speakers at the Windham, Westbrook, Gorham Triad meeting at the Gorham Police Department. We gave an overview of our Club's mission and handed out flyers, bookmarks, and business cards.



TRIAD Contacts

Name / Email		Phone
Sgt. Ted Hatch	Gorham PD	222-1681
Sgt. Tim Morrell	Westbrook PD	854-2531
Off. Trisha Buck	Windham PD	892-1919
Doris Ames		887-9222
Buffy Houpp		229-9050

What is TRIAD? TRIAD is a cooperative partnership between law enforcement agencies, elder service providers, and seniors in our community. The primary mission of TRIAD is to reduce the criminal victimization of older citizens, enhance the delivery of law enforcement services, and improve the quality of life for seniors.

TRIAD strives to: 1. Educate – sponsor programs for crime prevention, fraud, home security, elder abuse, etc. And 2. Communicate – provide a forum to discuss the concerns of seniors, develop and implement community-wide solutions.

TRIAD Meetings: You are encouraged to visit a TRIAD meeting to learn more about us. We meet at 9:00 am on the 2nd Friday of each month alternating between the Gorham Municipal Building and 22 Foster Street in Westbrook.

ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Program Committee

Program Meeting

Our first program meeting for 2026-27 went well as we attempted a get-together imitation of "speed dating" for the attendees. When everyone arrived, we all ordered our meals, which the North Deering Tavern crew knew should be delayed for forty-five minutes while we engaged in paired conversations. Then members were seated in pairs (four rows of people facing each other) and took turns asking each other questions. Each member was able to question and be questioned by three other members in stimulating conversation. At the end of this activity, our meals arrived at the same time for most of us, which has prompted us to consider making this serving delay part of future program meetings.





ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026



Program Committee

Membership

Next Program Meeting

Full throttle ahead after our whirlwind speed dating escapade! Now, instead of deciphering human quirks, we're diving into the world of gizmos and gadgets. Mark your calendars for **October 21st**, as we host a tech-tacular night to untangle your tech troubles. Got a burning question about your phone, internet hiccups, or sniffing out potential scams? Send your queries to the tech wizard Marie Pike by Friday, October 9th, and we'll do our best to conjure some answers!

Meanwhile, our committee is cooking up a trivia showdown with the board and Membership committee in November. Start plotting whom to recruit for your team—details to follow!

And before you know it, jingle bells will ring, signaling our holiday shindig. Time flies when you're having fun, right? Keep an eye out for more info on our festive gathering.

Don't forget to hit up Fran Jensen with those RSVPs for our next meeting at the North Deering Tavern!

Membership Drive

Our first official membership drive is scheduled for November 4th at the Westbrook Community Center as part of Trivia Night (see below). As we embark on the 2026-2027 year, we currently have 27 members and 1 Emeritus member. It's not too early to consider inviting potential members to our Trivia Night or any future club meeting.

Trivia Night

Bring your team of 4 or come by yourself for an opportunity to meet new friends! Join us on **Wednesday, November 4th** at 6:00 PM. This is a fun way to test your trivia skills and learn more about Altrusa's community service work. Between rounds, you can grab a refreshment, stretch your legs, and go buy your 50/50 raffle ticket. You can also participate in one of our ongoing service projects by making handwritten greeting cards for the residents of the Maine Veterans Home, Scarborough, while chatting with one of our members. Please RSVP to altrusaportland@gmail.com with the subject line of "trivia night". We look forward to seeing you there!





ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026



Finance Committee

Empty Bowl

In recognition of **World Food Day**, Altrusa International of Portland, Maine, will be hosting its 18th annual Empty Bowl supper. Choose a bowl to use for your meal, which includes soups, bread & crackers, beverages & desserts. You may keep your bowl as a reminder that there are always empty bowls in the world. Tickets available at the door are: **Adult \$15.00; children under 10 \$10.00**. All proceeds from this fundraiser go directly to benefit **Project FEED**, a volunteer-run emergency food pantry in Portland, Maine, which helps people facing sudden food crises.

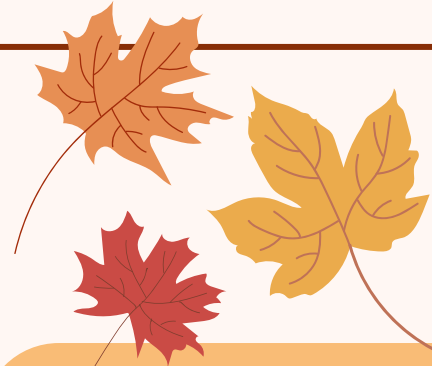
Calendar Raffle

Pam Lemieux and the Finance Committee are preparing for our **2027 Annual Calendar Raffle**. This signature fundraiser for our club features a "prize" for every day of January. If you would like to contribute a prize (value \$25-\$100) or know of a business that would like to participate, please email Pam before **October 15th**. She is planning to complete the calendar in time for the Empty Bowl Supper. Suggestions include gift cards and services. You do not need to have the prize to her by that date, only that you're donating it. For just \$10, you can secure 31 chances to win for yourself, as well as for your friends and family. Consider purchasing a calendar in gratitude for Thanksgiving or in memory of someone who has contributed positively to the community.

Membership

ASTRA

We're excited to announce that the **ASTRA Club** at **Lake Region High School** has a new advisor, Lynne Pelletier, a math teacher and the department chair.



"When free children's books are displayed alongside free food, it elevates the importance of books to the level of the importance of food"



ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Service Committee

Books-A-Million Summer Book Drive

Our **BAM Summer Bookdrive** was a great success!! Altrusa of Portland is the recipient of 1,380 books generously purchased by BAM patrons for our ABC program. A big thanks to the community for supporting us once again! These books will be used in the kindergarten classes and school libraries in the Greater Portland schools this year. Ann Smith and Christine Johnson were interviewed by Channel 6 and did an exceptional job sharing information about our **ABC program**. A special thank you to members who manned the table at BAM for 4 weekends, delivered the books to the warehouse, stickered the books and bagged and shelved them. Not only are these books used for our ABC program, but we generously offer them to any Altrusa club that requests them.



Books Behind Bars

To acknowledge International Literacy Month and as part of our Books Behind Bars service project, Arlene Hanson, delivered 170 books to Sargent Gendron of the Androscoggin County Jail.



ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Service Committee

Books-A-Million Fall Book Drive

The BAM Book Drive starts on October 18th and ends on December 6th. The shifts are Saturday and Sunday from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm, and Monday book pickup from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. We need volunteers! 2 members for each shift on Saturday and Sunday, and 1 to pick up books on Monday. Members can volunteer by going to [SignUpGenius](https://signupgenius.com).

Altrusaportland@gmail.com will receive an email confirming your sign-up. You will receive a reminder a few days before the event.

If you need to cancel, you can also do that by accessing the link, and an email is also sent to the Altrusa email so we will be notified of the cancellation.

Any questions, please contact Cathy Paglio.

Toys for Tots

On August 30th, we held the 2nd "Fill The Trunk" event, collecting toys for Toys for Tots by filling Cathy Paglio and her husband's Corvette. Thanks to the generosity of Altrusa members and friends, we met and overfilled the trunk of their Corvette. Delivery was made on Labor Day at the Toys for Tots Car Show at Portland Motor Club, by Cathy and Toni Parise.



UNE Scholarship

This year, Altrusa Portland awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to the **University of New England** to present to a deserving student. The recipient, Reegan Dunican of Nobleboro, Maine, is majoring in elementary education. We wish her every success in her future endeavors.





ALTRUSAGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026

Communications Committee



Email Etiquette Reminder

Use "reply all" only when everyone needs your response; otherwise, reply to the sender.

Reply all:

- Small-group decisions or scheduling
- Essential updates
- Questions for the group
- Corrections everyone needs to see

Reply to sender only:

- Club-wide RSVPs or calls to action
- One-on-one matters
- Information specific to the sender
- Brief thanks or congratulations

How to communicate with someone who is hard of hearing

Group conversations can be difficult and frustrating for people with hearing loss or tinnitus.

If you have hearing loss or tinnitus:

- Sit centrally so you can see everyone.
- Ask for clarification when needed.
- Speak up if the pace is too fast or voices are unclear.

For others in the group:

- Let one person speak at a time and reduce background noise.
- Use a microphone when available.
- Speak more slowly and slightly louder.
- Keep your hands away from your mouth for lip-reading.
- Rephrase unclear words or sounds.
- Summarize key points and repeat important information.

Kindness and patience make conversations easier and more human!

Service Hours

Please don't forget to input your Service Hours at this link: **Service Hours**



Thank you for continuing to fill up the green Altrusa CLYNK bags. Pam Lemieux can give you as many bags as you need. Fill them with your returnables and drop them off at your local Hannaford!

Articles are due by emailing comm.altrusaportland@gmail.com by the Friday after the Program Meeting. Newsletter Co-Editors: Erin Deprez and Gail Mazzone

