Central Breeze

Altrusa International of Central CT, Inc.

Volume 26, Issue 11 **November 2026**

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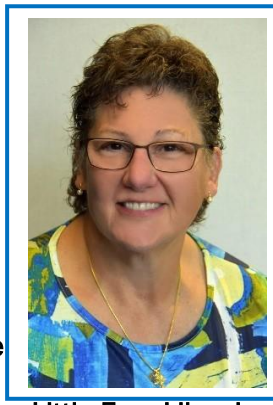
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Meetings
2nd and 4th Wed.
Wadsworth Glen
starting at 6:30 pm.

Presidential Prose



November is a time to reflect on all we have to be thankful for including the time and talents we have to share—and, thankfully, sometimes a little left over! As Altrusans, we turn that extra into something meaningful for our community.

October was a BUSY month! Between our **Dine-to-Donate** fundraiser at Texas Roadhouse, writing heartfelt letters **for GirlsLoveMail**, hosting **Books ARE Treats**, and filling our **Little Free Libraries**, we certainly kept ourselves hopping. What a wonderful reminder of what we can accomplish when we put our time and talents together!

In November, we turn our attention to supporting **our veterans**. Join us at **Ocean State Job Lot on November 4th** for the Buy/Give/Get coat event, and we'll be **delivering laundry detergent** to the PFC Nicholas A. Madaras House on November 10th to support our female veterans. We're also busy creating **Blankets of Warmth** for our female veterans, to be delivered at Christmas. Let's just say there's a LOT of yarn flying everywhere! It's heartwarming to see our members turning their talents into cozy gifts for those who have served our country.

🎟 **IT'S RAFFLE TIME! Have you SOLD all your raffle tickets yet?** If you need more, reach out to Linda or Lynne to get an extra supply. Remember, every ticket sold means more resources in our Foundation to support local community projects. So, keep selling, spread the word, and let's make this raffle a success! Be sure to like and share the raffle Facebook posts.

Amid all the activities, let's remember to slow down, count our blessings, and give thanks for our good fortune—and for the opportunity to make life a little better for others. Wishing you all a warm and happy Thanksgiving filled with gratitude, good company, and maybe a little leftover pie!

In Altrusa Service,
Linda



Thank you to ALL Veterans who have served our country!



Nov 11	Business Meeting - ZOOM only at 6:30pm
Nov 26	Thanksgiving
Dec 09	Raffle Drawing at 5pm Wadsworth Glen Middletown, CT
Dec 09	Holiday Gathering following raffle Jackowski's Home 666 Congdon Street West Middletown, CT

SAVE THESE DATES:

Nov 14	District One Fall Workshop Kennebunkport, ME
Apr 23-25, 2027	District One Spring Conference Freeport, ME
Jul 21-24, 2027	Altrusa International Convention Columbus, Ohio

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Birthday Wishes

Jamie Santaniello	Nov 25
Dorothy Stevens	Nov 25



Middlesex Chamber

MEMBER MEETING

Breakfast
November 2 - 25th Annual Support the Troops & Honor the Veterans Event - Register

Events
November 27 – Holiday on Main: Magic of Middletown Tree Lighting Ceremony from 4:00pm - 8:00pm on Main Street in Middletown

Business After Work
November & December – None scheduled.



Altrusa Accent at Upcoming Meetings

Nov 11	Cathy Boone
Dec 09	None/ holiday party
Jan 13	Suzanne Morello
Feb 10	Pat Jackowski
Mar 10	Lynne Havlicek
Apr 14	Hilda Schmidt
May 12	Elsie Mathews

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. ☺

Dine to Donate FUN-draiser at Texas Roadhouse



Club members came out in force to support our first Dine to Donate fundraiser at Texas Roadhouse in Cromwell, CT on Thursday, October 22. The early crew set up the table with our flyers, rack cards, banner, and bookcase full of books for all. We were ready at 4 pm, but there were not many customers. Luckily business picked up after 5:30 pm, and we had more time to engage customers before they were seated for their meals.

(Photo L: Pat Jackowski, Cathy Boone, Hilda Schmidt, Lynne Havlicek, Linda Ring)

Even our newest soon-to-be member, Chris Newton, was engaging their clients by recommending books to this Grandpa/granddaughter pair. Luckily, we had plenty of members present, so we could take turns at the table, while some enjoyed dinner with family.

Raffle tickets were available, and we used this opportunity to get the first set of sales on record! We sold 19 tickets and got an anonymous $10 donation for the club!

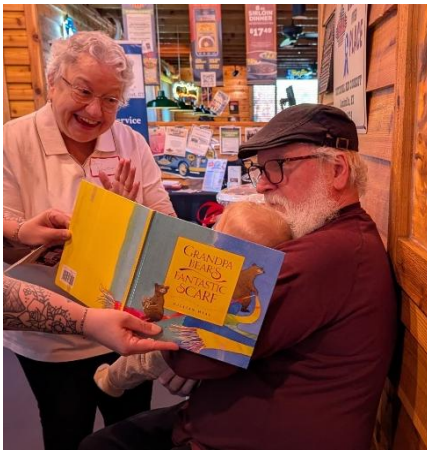




Photo above: Chris Newton engaging with a customer and his granddaughter.

Photo Left: Elsie Mathews, Laurie Caraway, Hilda Schmidt

We're looking forward to the report on how much was raised. This will definitely be on November's Meeting Agenda!

Thanks for all who attended and supported our first Dine to Donate fundraiser.

Linda Ring & Hilda Schmidt

October's Project Meeting / Social Gathering



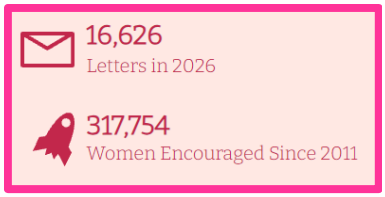
It was a busy day at our project meeting / social gathering at Pat's home on Wednesday, October 28th . We collected our laundry detergents and calendars for our female veterans, initiated a new member, and wrote letters for GirlsLoveMail!

Our shoppers were combing the sales flyers and found the best deals on Laundry Detergent for our November delivery to PFC. Nicholas A Madaras Home for female veterans. Kathleen will take these items down to Bridgeport on November 10th.

We are thrilled to welcome Chris Newton, Pat's sister, to our Altrusa family. She is now a certified STOCKHOLDER of AICC, Inc. Virginia emcee'd the initiation, Hilda presented Chris with her club handbook, and Pat (her sponsor) gave Chris her Altrusa member pin.

Welcome Chris!





After a refreshment break, we gathered our thoughts, sat around the table, and penned handwritten letters of encouragement to women newly diagnosed with Breast Cancer. This is our salute to October, being Breast-Cancer Awareness month. All notes and letters are collected and sent off to GirlsLoveMail for distribution. **We wrote 51 letters.** www.girlslovemail.com

Photo: Cathy Boone, Jamie Santaniello, Chris Newton, Hilda Schmidt, Suzanne Morello, Virginia Townes, Bonnie (former member), Kathleen Didato, Linda Ring
Also present: Pat Jackowski

Linda



Spencer Readers Second Year Begins



Five confirmed members of Altrusa International of Central CT have signed up to continue to read at Spencer School in the PKA (Pre-Kindergarten Academy) with teacher Angela Sosnovich as teacher, Chris Newton, retired in June. PKA program was put into place for those children turning 5 years old with the 'ber' birthdays. All turn 5 by January.

Thanks to readers: Kathleen Didato, Pat Jackowski, Suzanne Morello, Linda Ring, and Virginia Townes who have signed up. We have a potential reader recruited at our Book are Treats event that has to be vetted by the Board of Education.

If you would like to join our group of readers, please contact Pat Jackowski.

Books are Treats – A Howling Success

Our newest endeavor, Books are Treats proved to be a howling success. On Friday, October 30, 2026 from 11 AM – 3 PM, we partnered with staff from the Middletown City Hall and Recreation Department providing evidence of our mission – Literacy for all Ages. A total of 255 books were delivered to residents of all ages. The following is the breakdown:

Young Children	136
Chapter Books	41
Young Adult/Tween	37
Adult	21
Total	255



"Ginnie," our resident Bookworm was available to entertain and entice our readers to pick a book to take home. Many thanks to Altrusan, Virginia Townes, for meandering the halls and even stopping to visit with our Mayor, Gene Nocera. We also recruited a potential Spencer Reader and a couple possible members. Not included in our total were 41 books taken by Virginia Townes to distribute at the Shiloh Baptist Church Trunk or Treat on Halloween. Thanks to all.

Pat Jackowski

Altrusa's Little Free Library at Middletown City Hall

It seems to be a popular place for people to find books. There's been lots of activity. Thanks to Lynne, Pat, and Kathleen who regularly stop by to make sure it's fully stocked!



And just a few days later…



And after our Books ARE Treats event…



RAFFLE TICKET SALES

We are off to a great start this year. The Club sold over 90 tickets at the Texas Roadhouse Dine to Donate event. For over 13 years our raffle proceeds have provided funds to underwrite our community events and projects throughout the year. At $5.00 per ticket the price is right!

Reminder, we need all tickets (sold and unsold) returned by Saturday, December 5 th to prepare for the drawing on Wednesday, December 9th at 5:00pm at Wadsworth Glen. Please contact me to pick drop off or pick up raffle tickets and on behalf of the Raffle Committee, THANK YOU!

Lynne Havlicek and the Raffle Committee,
Pat Jackowski, Linda Ring and Jamie Santaniello

Altrusa Accent – October 14, 2026 (Presented by Kathleen Didato)

Although we designate October for Make A Difference Day, I'm sure making a difference occurs every day. We sometimes think that making a difference requires a grand gesture, a major donation, or a large community project. But what if the most meaningful thing we do this week is something very small that makes another person's day a little brighter. A sincere Good Morning- how is your day going and genuinely listen. At the Post Office, holding the door for someone and giving that person a big smile, saying hello to someone you don't usually talk to, letting someone go ahead of you in line, checking in on a friend you haven't spoken to in a while, telling someone you appreciate them. Try including someone who looks left out of a conversation, give someone your full attention instead of looking at your phone, telling someone they're doing a good job, celebrate someone else's success. It works! It is uplifting and directly connected to the spirit of service.

Service isn't just about what we give to others. It's also about what we build together-a stronger community, deeper friendships, and a greater sense of belonging. One good deed can inspire another. We help one person who in turn helps someone else. That person's kindness spreads further, creating a ripple effect that reaches people we may never meet. What will our community remember about us?

Altrusa's legacy is built through the lives we touch. Years from now, what will people remember about our organization? Will it be the events we held, the funds we raised, or the people who felt supported because we were there when they needed us. I believe that in a world that often feels divided, service brings people together.

Kathleen Didato



Highlights from October 14, 2026 Business Meeting

- **General Business – Linda Ring**
  - Raffle – Tickets will be available at Dine to Donate and GirlsLoveMail events. Linda will post on Facebook next week, please share.
  - District Nominating Committee – looking for candidates for ALL positions! Please consider and give back.
  - Search for new meeting location
    American Legion – Cost Prohibitive – 150.00/night. We will hold raffle drawing on December 9th
    At Wadsworth Glen.
  - International Challenge – ONE BOOK - Target to donate at least one book per club member.
    - September 1st – November 30th.
  - Service Partnership with Middlesex Community College – Knitting Circle – Linda participated.
    Meeting Monday 9/21-10/12, 12:30-2:00 pm, Pavillion at Founders Hall
    Cromwell Craft Group – Linda sent them out information, no reply to date.

- **Membership - Linda**
  - New member proposal – Pat J. – Chris Newton would like to become a member.
  - Plan initiation. October 28th at GirlsLoveMail event.

- **Fundraising Reports**
  - **Dine to Donate at Texas Roadhouse, Cromwell – Hilda Schmidt**
    - Reserve the date Thursday 10/22, 4 to 8:00pm.
    - Flyers in the October Central Breeze and we will bring some for those who forget theirs.
    - Set up at 3:45 – they will provide table.
    - Also bringing books

  - **Lights In Motion – Linda Ring**
    - New program. Need 9 volunteers per night.
    - Our date is Sunday, December 13th, 4:30 to 9:00pm. Please reserve the dates on your calendar.
    - Let me know ASAP if you can commit to this date, or if we must leverage family and friends to meet the commitment!
    - We will receive a flat rate plus a percent to the night's take.

- **Service Updates**
  - **Story Walk – Laurie Caraway –** Committee is borrowing one book from Northeast CT for spring kick-off.

  - **MADD – Pat Jackowdki ➔ ONE Book Challenge?**
  - Refresh LFL stations (Amazing Grace, City Hall, YMCA) and report number of books distributed.
  - Books ARE Treats! – Oct 30th 11-3 at Middletown City Hall. Book giveaway with Virginia our Bookworm. Pat and Lynne have books. Come in Costume or bookworm t-shirt. Linda will Bring bags.

  - **GirlsLoveMail – Linda Ring**
    Breast Cancer Awareness Month
    Use 2nd October (the 28th) meeting for a 'writing event' and Fellowship at Pat's home. 6:30pm. Linda will email the direction for the cards.


Altrusa
Holiday Party
Wednesday, December 9, 2026
After the Raffle Drawing
The Jackowski's Home
666 Congdon St. West
Middletown, CT 0657
Catered by Fireside
Bring your donations of
Seasonings and Baby items
Enjoy an evening of
food, fellowship and relaxation

United Nations/Altrusa International November 2026 Highlight



November 25 - International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

The United Nations General Assembly has designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Violence against women is one of the most widespread and persistent human rights violations in the world. Despite decades of advocacy, countless women continue to face physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse.

The origins of this day lie in the legacy of the Mirabal Sisters, political activists from the Dominican Republic, who were assassinated in 1960 for resisting the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo. Their bravery and tragic deaths became a symbol of women's struggle against oppression. By honoring them, the international community recognizes that violence against women is not only a personal issue but a profound political and social malfunction rooted in discrimination, inequality, and the abuse of power.

Gender-based violence manifests in many forms: domestic abuse, rape, harassment at work or online, human trafficking, forced marriage, and femicide. Its consequences ripple far beyond the victims, damaging families, communities, and national development. According to global estimates, one in three women will experience physical or sexual violence in her lifetime—a statistic that highlights the urgent need for both prevention and protection.

Pat Jackowski

ALTRUSA International | Leading to a Better Community® of Central CT, Inc.

Small Tickets. Big Impact.

2026 Raffle

RAFFLE TICKETS $5 EACH

A chance to win one of 43 prizes!

Supporting Literacy for All Ages



Buy a raffle ticket for $5, support our local community service efforts and have an opportunity to win one of 43 prizes!

Just in time for the holidays!

OUR COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

We actively promote literacy for all ages and support these local initiatives:

ABC – Altrusa Books for your Community
Collecting new and gently used books (for preschool through adult) which are distributed throughout the year.

Awards/Scholarships
Honoring two high school students and one Middlesex Community College graduate who exemplify academic potential and community service.

Senior Citizen Poetry Contest and Reception
Encouraging our seniors to share their life experiences through poetry.

Hungry Babies are not an Illusion
Collecting baby food and diapers to provide supplies to Amazing Grace food pantry, WIC, and Middletown Diaper Bank programs.

Pack the Pickup with Proteins for the Pantry
Joining forces with Civitans, Soroptimists, and Alpha Kappa Delta Org, we collect protein items for Amazing Grace Food Pantry.

Female Soldiers: Forgotten Heroes
Providing a handmade afghan to each resident at Madaras home in Bridgeport, the first transitional home for female vets.

43 GREAT PRIZES FROM LOCAL FAVORITES!

- Ace Hardware
- Amato's Toy and Hobby
- Bella Notte
- Bella'Gia Ristorante
- Big Y
- Blackbird Tavern
- Brew Bakers
- Butcher Bros Steakhouse
- Carbone's Prime
- Cava Restaurant
- Chick-Fil-A
- Deb's Restaurant
- George's Pizza Restaurant
- Great Taste Chinese Restaurant
- Il Gusto
- Illiano's Restaurant
- Jersey Mike's
- Lyman Orchards
- Market 32
- Mondo Pizza
- Neil's Donuts
- New Mill Restaurant
- Newfield Pizza
- Parisian Day Spa
- Pastaio Restaurant
- Pocket Full of Posies
- RJ Julia Bookstore
- Seven Moons Thai Restaurant
- Sicily
- Starbucks
- Texas Roadhouse
- Vespucci's
- Viron Rondo Osteria
- Wild Orchid

...and many more!

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Proceeds help fund our local community service and literacy programs.

Together we can create brighter futures!



Strong Communities Start with Literacy!

Winners will be identified December 10, 2025 at 5 pm
at Wadsworth Glen, 30 Boston Road, Middletown

Thank you for your support!

Altrusa is an international organization of business and professional volunteers dedicated to community service. We have a history of serving Central CT for more than 60 years!

Altrusa.CentralCT@gmail.com

Promoting Literacy | Serving Our Community | Creating Brighter Futures

Together We Make a Difference!

Message from Altrusa International President
(Altrusa Compass: October 2026)



C –

It's a great letter of the alphabet. It can represent many different things. The first thing that you will notice is the new look of The Compass. We hope you enjoy flipping the pages of The Compass. Change is good. What also comes to mind for me is the changing colors of the trees here in northern Illinois. They are especially vibrant this year and serve as a wonderful reminder of nature's beauty. It is the season for campfires, college football, and hot chocolate. It also reminds me to slow down and enjoy this season before the hustle and bustle of the holidays begins.

We have been busy making plans for the 2027 International Convention in Columbus, Ohio. There is so much to share that we've included a separate article in this publication to help you begin planning to attend. This is going to be a great Convention!
The Literacy Challenge continues to gain momentum. Any club that has donated one book per member during the challenge will receive a new patch for their club banner. Congratulations to those clubs! Be sure to check out the Counting in Altrusa article later in this publication to see the latest progress, as well as the club recipients recognized during the first month of the challenge.

Thank you for all you do to distribute books throughout our communities. Facebook and other social media platforms provide a wonderful glimpse into the impact Altrusans are making every day. It is inspiring to see the positive difference members are making in their communities, as well as the strong fellowship that supports both the recruitment and retention of members.
The International Board and Committees have also been busy. You will find two new guides on the international website covering social media and financial reviews, so be sure to check them out. In addition, work continues on our application for consultative status with the United Nations.

As we prepare for the holidays, please take time to reflect, recharge, and re-energize for an exciting 2027. I know we will all continue working hard throughout this upcoming holiday season and into the coming year. Together, let's spread the LOVE, LITERACY & LEGACY of Altrusa and never stop counting the positive difference each book we distribute makes in this world.

With Altrusa Love,
Christine "Chris" DeVlieger
International President



"Keeping the Spark Alive"

District One Workshop 2026
Saturday, November 14, 2026
Nonantum Resort
95 Ocean Avenue
Kennebunkport, ME 04046

Hosted by: Greater Biddeford-Saco, ME

Hotel Reservations:

- Call the hotel at 1-888-205-1555
- Mention 'Altrusa' when booking
- Rate: $249 per night (includes Breakfast Buffet for 2)
- Deadline: October 13, 2026

Conference Registration:

- Early Bird (before 11/1) - $75
- Regular Registration - $80
- Day of Event - $85

Registration Link:
https://forms.gle/VPVZGUnEz6YEcd8f6

Send your check, payable to:
Altrusa International, District One
Diane O'Reilly
432 Alison Drive
Torrington, CT 06790

Featuring **Hands-On Service Project** for Maine Needs… all supplies will be provided by District.

To thank our host club, bring children's board books for their project.

AGENDA

8:30 – 9:00	Workshop Registration-Check In
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome, Introduction of Board & Committee Chairs, Altrusa Grace
9:30 - 10:30	Workshop: Current Membership
10:30 - 10:45	Call to conference Altrusa International of Portland ME
11:00 – 11:30	Workshop: Building a Culture of Belonging
11:30 – 12:00	Guest Speaker TBD
12:10 – 1:20	Ocean Ave Market Lunch Buffet
1:30- 2:30	Service Project
2:45 - 3:00	Wrap Up, Thanks to the host club: Greater Biddeford-Saco ME., Benediction

It's not too late to attend the Fall Workshop…

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/
What is the login and password for the International web page? ALTRUSAN and MamieBass1955

How can I update my contact information with Altrusa? https://altrusa.grouptally.com/
How can I purchase Altrusa branded items (pins, banners, etc)? www.altrusastore.com

Use the Suggestion Box to give International some feedback and share your thoughts on improving Altrusa.

KENNEDY'S CORNER



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