

What Happened?

and Information about our Club.

Bentonville/Bella Vista

July / August 2020

July August Birthdays

July 16 Pat Sporleder

July 19 Connie Brown

July 29 Linda Krysl

July Terri Gaither

No August Birthdays

Better Community®

Bella Vista AR Foundation, Inc.

President: Kris Sherry krissherry@aol.com



A Note from our President- As I was

preparing to write my Presidents Message for the newsletter, I started thinking about this last three months and how they have just flown by. I thought about the many things we would be doing right now if not for the virus. I think of the book swaps missed, the back packs not stuffed and the spaghetti dinner that won't get served. I think of the Bella Vista Library back to school fair we don't get to be a part of. I think about the various areas we would have served lunches to other volunteers or stood side by side with our sister clubs while they do their community outreach projects. If I focused on the tasks that we aren't able to accomplish, instead of the result, I can get pretty discouraged about my first year of being a President. This year has definitely tested our club's resilience. But that is all its done is "test".

Resilience is defined as the ability to recover quickly from difficulty, "toughness". This club doesn't focus on tasks, but results. In the past three months we have accomplished more than I would have ever dreamed and this was because of the way this club was financially poised at the start of 2020. We have still been able to give back to our community in ways that may have not seemed possible. We "recovered quickly" because of the amazing members of this club and the leadership we have had in building the foundation of this club.

Just a few of the ways we are maintaining our altruistic spirit in the local community is the monetary donations we have made to NFP's like DEB Project where we donated \$500 towards the purchase of socks and underwear and the \$500 we gave Samaritan Center in response to the increased need for their pantry because of the effects of COVID19 on local families. We have also continued to give monetarily to Decatur and Gravette libraries as well as western Benton County schools where we donated \$1000 and school supplies to Decatur Northside Elementary.

The even more amazing things our club is doing is in non-monetary ways like volunteerism in the community and the new book barns we are installing at a few of the elementary schools and libraries in the area. Our club members have been busy carrying on the torch of "Altrusan aims" until we meet again.

Until we meet again.... *Kris Sherry/Davis*

The **July 7**. Zoom meeting was called to order by President Kris with the following **Altrusa Accent...** Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. *John F. Kennedy*

Recording Secretary Sue reported that the Executive Board met and voted on and approved the Foundation Budget and the Operating Budget. We are ready to rock and roll!

Connie reported that **The Literacy Committee** met and recommended that we do a pilot program of outdoor book boxes at **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School** in Bentonville and **Northside Elementary School** in Decatur. Each site would have two boxes – a box to take books from and a box to return books to.

Terri and her husband Bill, and Gail and her husband “Butch”, are cleaning, delecting, sanding, painting, remodeling, and labeling the book boxes for this pilot program.

Gail will be taking books over to **Gravette/Decatur Schools and Libraries** for their summer program kits. The kits will also include STEM sets that were donated by the Amazeum.

The **DEB Project** made donations of \$3,000 to each of the Gravette, Gentry, and Decatur Schools! The store is open and Sammy needs help to set-up the shop for Fall. Volunteers will be most welcome from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on September 8, 9, 10, and maybe the 11th. Sammy could also use help with the laundry. Karen M. said that she and her husband plan to do the food pantry again.

Kris pointed out that though there are many people on the **Spaghetti Dinner** Committee, there was no chair or co-chair. Ann Marie, who has chaired the committee for the past two years, said she would do all that she could without exposing herself or her husband to virus risks. Gay promised her help. *Then*, Anne Marie and her crew met and decided *not* to have the dinner in October due to COVID-19 concerns. They are hoping to reschedule later.

Janet emailed 14 schools asking their opinion about continuing with the **Dictionary Project**. She has received responses from four schools. Osage Creek and Pea Ridge said the dictionaries are not needed, Willowbrook said they’d like to continue receiving them and Centerton Gamble said they had enough extras to cover this year. She was *underwhelmed* by the responses but will continue to keep tabs on what the other schools report.

Samaritan Community Center needed volunteers to stuff backpacks on July 27 and 28. They had a safe set-up procedure. When I went online to sign up all the spots were filled. They will have lots of help!

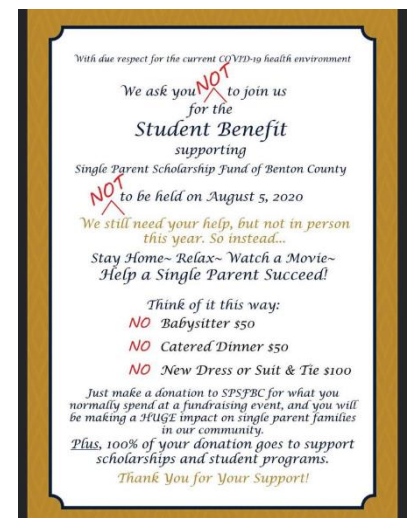
Our budget contains \$500 for the **Bella Vista Library** and there is an additional \$400 remaining for the Library from last year’s budget. Terri asked that we donate an additional \$100 so that we could donate an impressive \$1,000 to the Bella Vista Library when they open their expansion. We all agreed it was a great idea!

The **July 21** program meeting was called to order by President Kris via Zoom with this **Altrusa Accent...** We ought to give thanks for all fortune; if it is ‘good,’ because it is good, if ‘bad’ because it works in us patience, humility, and the contempt of this world and the hope of our eternal country.

C. S. Lewis

Karen R. shared the **Single Parent Scholarship Fund’s** announcement that there would **NOT** be a benefit this year! However, giving donations in lieu of buying tickets would be wonderful. They are requesting donations of items for adult students like hand wipes, hand sanitizer, notebooks, composition paper. The items can be dropped off at the office where someone is on duty. This year they helped 20 graduates – 9 received a bachelor’s degree; 8 received an associate degree, and 3 received a certificate. Thirty plus applicants will receive a scholarship from the 40 - 50 applications received for the Fall semester. Aren’t we happy to be involved with them!

Our **Days for Girls** liaison Lorrie Healy is ready to restart the program, but the Virus is making it almost impossible. If members would like to volunteer in their own home doing sewing or non-sewing tasks, contact Lorrie. (801-699-8669), She’ll prepare a tub of materials to work with. They can be picked up and dropped off on her porch. Or you can ask her to deliver it to you! Connie had some great news. Laurie has found a source to send Days for Girls kits



to Venezuela for *FREE* each month! Along with the kits we can send 10 to 15 books. The committee will decide if they would like to use any kit-budgeted funds for other purposes, such as buying books in Spanish to send to Venezuela.

The **Executive Board** met and approved the following slate of officers for our Foundation Board:

President – Gay Kiker,

Vice-President – Kris Sherry,

Treasurer – Vella Lewis,

Secretary – Sue Sterling,

Directors – Valerie Katz, Karen Robbins, Peggy Rosenthal.

They also assigned Linda and Karen as an Audit Committee.

Our program today was presented by **Kris Davis, a School Social Worker for the Decatur School District**. She explained the differences between a School Counselor and a School Social Worker. The Counselor is restricted to the School itself. The Social Worker usually has out of office meetings with parents, and community agencies.

She said her visits to students' homes are invaluable because home life is key to understanding a child's behavior. Eighty-five percent of the student population lives in poverty and receives free breakfasts and lunches. There is an after-school dinner program. Anyone 18 and under can get these meals free and parents can for a small fee. One of her current duties is delivering food to families since food insecurity is a common problem. This is made difficult because the parents don't want to feel like charity cases. She has a difficult job and is an inspiration to us all.

The **Aug. 4**. The Zoom meeting was called to order by President Kris with the following **Altrusa Accent...** Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only understood. *NOW IS THE TIME* to understand more and fear less.

Marie Curie

Even during the Covid 19 craziness our **Literacy Committee's** work continues.

We had been asked to provide a letter of support for Gravette Librarian Karen Benson who is applying for the Jerry Kline Community Impact Prize of \$250,000. Gail and Connie drafted the letter and sent it to the committee for approval. They sent it to President Kris for her signature and then off the letter went to Karen Benson to be included in the award submission. Good luck Karen!



Books have been taken to **Decatur** where they will be part of summer program kits.

Our club partnered in the **Food and Fun Pack** giveaway at Decatur. We furnished the reusable bags and children's books.

The **Literacy Committee** makes it look easy to continue our important work!

Terri and her husband have sanded the book boxes for the **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School** and created a drop door. Gail and her husband are preparing the boxes for

Northside Elementary School in Decatur. We will be getting books to the children again soon!



On **Aug. 12** Gail and Kris delivered a check for \$1,000 to help purchase tablets and much needed school supplies to Cary Stamps, School Principal of the **Decatur Northside Elementary School**. He was very excited to get the donation and will let us know how the money was spent. A large amount of school supplies that Club members donated, and huge tubs of lunch kits provided by the DEB Project were also given.



On the **Communications** front, Valerie sent out the new Yearbooks to all members! An electronic version may be available in the future if there is a demand.

The **Audit Committee Report** got a thumbs up for their work. The Financial Review letter from Bank Regulator Mark Krysl said, “The organization should complement Ms. Lewis and Ms. McAuley on their excellent record keeping and the accuracy and neatness of the information.” Great job ladies!

The **Aug. 18** meeting was called to order by President Kris with this **Altrusa Accent...** Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you want and let the food fight it out inside... *Mark Twain*

Our **Literacy Committee** needs books! Connie reported that our supplies of books has “dried up” due to the virus. She asked members to be on the look-out for opportunities to get books. She also reminded members to check out our **Facebook** page to see what’s been happening. Preparation of the book boxes for Thomas Jefferson Elementary School and Northside Elementary School, and check presentations. It’s all there ladies!

Gail let us know that the book boxes for **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School** have been completed and delivered. The librarian, Sue Bentel, has volunteered to manage the boxes. She’s calling it her “virtual library”. Gail and her husband have painted the book boxes for **Northside Elementary School** in Decatur. All that’s left is to put on the hardware!

The **Dictionary Project** has finally received some answers. Kris reported for Janet that 13 of the 14 schools contacted finally responded regarding their need for dictionaries. Only 4 of the schools (Apple Glen, Thomas Jefferson, Willowbrook, and Gravette Elementary) would like to receive dictionaries. The remaining 9 reported that they did not want them this year. A very sad report to be sure. However, it makes the absence of the Spaghetti Dinner less devastating.

Based on the **Club Annual Report**, which Gay submitted in May, our club has been designated, (for the second year!) a Distinguished Club for 2020. We will receive a gold pin which we will proudly display on our banner!

Our program was from Shannon Modisette, the founder of **Socks and Cookies**. The organization’s motto is *Honor the need; respect the want*. In addition to sending “care packages” to soldiers, they have two other

programs – **Socks and Tots** which sends kits to deployed families with kids under one year old and **Kickin Bass** which coordinates bass fishing tournaments all around the country and then gives the proceeds to troops in the state where the tournament took place. The packages include items like protein bars, beef jerky, playing cards, crackers. Sometimes the packages include books or magazines. Her office contains a Wall of Honor where pictures of care package recipients and *Thank You* letters are displayed. Information about the organization can be found, including ways to donate, at their website: socksandcookies.org

We received this letter from Andrea VanSandt thanking us for our contribution to the Decatur SPARK Program.

Hello Gail and Bentonville/ Bella Vista Altrusa International team,

On behalf of myself, the volunteers, and the families of Decatur, I'd like to thank you again for joining me in the Food and Fun Give away project for Decatur families. It really was a special event. By working together, we were able to give away 310 activity packs; over 600 books; 200 bags of apples; 200 produce boxes consisting of: tomatoes, avocados, lettuce, onions, tortillas and cantaloupes; 100 lbs of cheese; and over 1800 lbs of frozen chicken! This project was a true community partnership. I thought you would like to see the results of our collaboration. Andrea VanSandt, 21st CCLC "SPARK" Program Director, Decatur School District

"My kids were reading a book and coloring 😊 And they've played connect 4 about 50 times already 😊 Can't say Thank you enough! They have been irritating each other and we haven't really gotten out or bought anything new in months.... and now both of their b-days are coming up in September so I keep telling them they have to wait. THIS was a much needed surprise and they are absolutely delighted! I'd be happy to volunteer if/next time!!! 😊" -R.S.

"I wanted to thank you for the groceries you gave me through [a friend] yesterday! I made a fajita casserole with some sautéed squash my neighbor gave me (and many of the ingredients you sent) and shared it with him as well. We both enjoyed a delicious meal from it. Thank you! I'll also have enough chicken to make more daisy or share with my family! I don't cook a whole lot for myself... but I sure enjoyed making up this recipe!" -L.G.

"[My grandson] playing with the water balloons Decatur school gave him in his play pack today. He really enjoys it and really appreciates the things he got today. Thank you Decatur School and nice folks who distributed the play packs today. Made his day" -PL

Know this, your kindness extends further than you know, and your generosity is being multiplied. Thank you for helping share fun, encouragement, and hope to families who needed it.

*Beyond grateful,
Andrea*





Aug. 27 found Linda, Gail and Marian presenting a check for \$500 for youth nonfiction books to Karen Benson, Library Director of the **Gravette Library**.

Bits and Pieces...

Gay shared that club member Katy contracted COVID – 19. She was able to remain at home while recovering.

Once again, I want to thank Connie and Sue for their help in making this newsletter, newsworthy.

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Meetings are held via ZOOM during this Covid 19 craziness Our web-site altrusa-bb.com See us on Face book www.facebook.com/altrusa8