

What Happened?

News and Information about our Club.

Bentonville/Bella Vista

Sept./Oct. 2020



Sept. /Oct. Birthdays

Sept. 1 Donna Williams

Sept. 17 Sue Sterling

Sept. 26 Gail Cowden

Oct. 10 Peggy Rosenthal

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A Note from our President... You know, if there is one thing this pandemic has confirmed for me, it is that the “starfish story” is more important than ever to reflect on and draw from. In the past, during the months of September and October we had “all hands-on deck” in preparation for the Spaghetti dinner and the dictionary deliveries. The excitement and anticipation were felt by all as we prepared to feed over 200 residents and deliver almost 2000 dictionaries. When the need is large it’s easy to get caught up in the energy. However, like with all things, COVID 19 has drastically affected the volume our club has encountered in the past and the hope of a fall spaghetti dinner dwindles as fast as the reduced number of dictionary deliveries. But we have to stay the course and remember where we started. Like the story ...

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a boy picking something up and gently throwing it into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, “What are you doing?”

The youth replied, “Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don’t throw them back, they’ll die.”

“Son,” the man said, “don’t you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can’t make a difference!”

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it back into the surf.

Then, smiling at the man, he said.....“I made a difference for that one.”

Thank you all for the difference you make and staying the course. And remember, if it matters to one, it is good enough.

The **Sept. 1** meeting was held once again via Zoom. We are grateful to Zoom technology for making our meetings possible. The meeting was called to order by President Kris with the following **Altrusa Accent...** Once you learn to read, you will be free forever. *Frederick Douglas*

There were two guests, Christina Bush, a friend of Kris' who is a prospective member and Penny Storms who is the District Eight Governor Elect. She will be installed as District Governor in Tulsa next April. She said she is "at your service" for questions regarding District matters.

Connie shared what the **Literacy Committee** has been up to. We are still looking for sources of children's books and she has planned for the DEB Project and the Samaritan Center to share their excess books. She and Gail will look over our existing supply and sort them for presentation to Decatur and Thomas Jefferson elementary schools and the Gravette and Bella Vista libraries.

The book boxes at **Gravette/Decatur Schools and Libraries** have been completed and installed. Go to our Facebook page to see pictures of the boxes as well as those at **Thomas Jefferson Elementary**. And see the work that went into them by Gail and her husband Butch, and Terri and her husband Bill.

Our **Days for Girls** liaison, Lorrie Healy, has sent a shipment of kits to Lebanon and Venezuela. If you would like to volunteer in your own home doing sewing or non-sewing tasks, she is happy to prepare a tub of materials for you to work with. Just call her at 801-699-8669 and you can pick up and drop off the tub on her porch, or ask she will deliver it to you.

Tina reported that the **DEB Project** is doing well and is expanding. The Project now has 3 former shops that have been merged. The third, which holds home décor, was added recently. We met Sammy years ago when she was starting this mission and was working out of her home. Sammy works with counselors and social workers to find families in need. Each season foster-home kids get 5 free tops and bottoms. And! We have a book nook there! Great job Sammy.

The **Dictionary Committee**, led by Janet, met, and will provide dictionaries to 3rd graders in Gravette, Apple Glen, and Willowbrook, and to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders at Decatur. That amounts to about 520 books; last year we delivered 1900. Terri is going to check out a sample of the Spanish/English dictionary sold by The Dictionary Project with the possibility of providing some to Decatur and maybe to Gentry.

Connie reported on the **Support Our Soldiers Committee**. They are developing a project for a group workshop for "kits" which members may complete at home and then return. The project, cutting out stars from salvaged flags and using them to create pocket cards that will be given to veterans on Veterans Day. Also, to be included in the **Socks and Cookies Christmas Project**. We received 266 bags of jerky from the DEB Project, for the Socks and Cookies Christmas Project!



Sept 8. Was World Literacy Day! Our members went parading around our world giving away books to Thomas Jefferson Elementary, Bella Vista Library, Gravette Library, Decatur Library

and Decatur Elementary School. Literacy is the single most important skill to improve the quality of life! Our Club remembers know, "Today's readers are tomorrow's Leaders!"



This group is standing in front of the book boxes we put in front of the school last month.



Here are the ladies getting the books sorted and ready for the big day.

On the **Communications** front, Valerie sent out the July/August newsletter and placed articles about our \$1,000 donation to Northside Elementary School and our \$500 donation to the Gravette Library, to both of our local papers.

The Decatur Librarian had requested books for adults and The **Literacy Committee** received a donation of hard cover adult books that were given to them in honor of **World Literacy Day**. Gail informed us that at a parade stop, Gravette Library staff member Bailey, gave her a copy of the *West Side Eagle Observer*, the local newspaper, that had an article about our Club. Bailey also gave her a *Thank You* card for the \$500 donation for non-fiction books that we gave the library.

The **Sept. 15** meeting was called to order by President Kris with the following **Altrusa Accent...** The reason women don't play football is because 11 of them would never wear the same outfit in public. *Phyllis Diller*



KUDOs to Marion! She learned about the need for child-sized masks when she was part of the World Literacy Day parade. She went right home, made 60, and gave them to Decatur! If you know of any other place that need children's masks, Marion said to "Let her know!"

Tina let us know that Sammy has described the re-set at the **DEB Project** store a success. Sammy praised Connie for picking up and dropping off items. And praised Judy who was there every day and was an amazing help. The pantry is going to be replaced with grocery gift cards. Our group decided to donate \$200 of the \$500 budgeted for Sammy, to purchase the gift cards. Their on-line store has launched!
<https://www.debproject.com/shop>.



As for the **Dictionary Project**, Kris reported for Janet. English dictionaries were ordered for Gravette, Apple Glen, Willowbrook and Decatur. There were two boxes of Spanish/English dictionaries ordered for Decatur and Gravette. A big THANK YOU to Linda for storing the books in her garage.

The **Single Parent Scholarship Fund** has been dealing with problems brought on by this Covid 19 mess. Karen said the office is still closed. All contact with students is either virtual or electronic. There will not be a Christmas Party this year, but **The Festival of Giving** will still take place. However, donors will be asked to purchase gift cards instead of items, for the student's *wish list*. They are organizing special days for recipients to drive-through and pick up needed items each month to help them through this difficult time via a September Supply Drive. Requested supplies are: 12-pack toilet paper, 6-pack paper towels and feminine hygiene products.

Connie informed us that the **Literacy Committee** is in the process of gathering books and Beanie Babies for the **Single Parent Scholarship Fund** Festival of Giving.

Our program today was presented by Dr. Amanda Musick, **the Director of Student Services for Bentonville Schools**. She explained the **Bright Futures Initiative**. The Bright Futures Initiative has been in existence for six years, providing, within 24 hours, the personal needs of students and their families. She thinks the initiative has improved graduation rates since, there are student advocates at the high school level who work with potential dropouts and encourage students to attend classes more regularly. Supplies are available for teachers, counselors, and principals to provide, in a hurry, items such as clothing and food. Needs such as rent and utility payments are also provided but may take longer. When COVID-19 caused schools to close they provided 85,000 meals in three months! School bus drivers delivered food to the homes of the 100 students who were not able to travel and get the meals. She suggested that, related to literacy, we could donate funds for schools to use at their book sales events.

Our **Oct. 6** our Zoom meeting was called to order by President Kris with this **Altrusa Accent...** Every leaf speaks bliss to me, fluttering from the autumn tree. *Emily Bronte*

Our club treasurers are doing a fantastic job of caring for our cash!
Our Club **Foundation Treasurer**, Vella Lewis, reported that the Sept. account balance was \$19,016.85.
Our Club **Operating Treasurer**, Karen McAuley, reported that the Sept. account balance was \$3,807.05. The Petty Cash balance was \$74.63. Both reports will be filed for audit.

Terri described the book boxes at **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School** as unfortunately placed. The school librarian said that our book boxes are not being used even though she is promoting it with her library classes. She is going to find a better location for them. The librarian will set up a book swap in October. Terri has provided Fall and Christmas themed books.

The **Dictionary Project** has been completed for this year. Linda reported for Janet that the dictionaries have been delivered! She and Karen M. delivered dictionaries to Gravette and Decatur. At Decatur, the principal gave them a tour of the school, and the two-3rd grade and the two-4th grade classes that received the dictionaries. Third graders received dictionaries at Gravette. Terri delivered the dictionaries for third graders at Apple Glen and Janet took the dictionaries to third graders at Willowbrook.

The virtual **Altrusa Benediction** was given by Carla.

On **Oct. 10th** the **Support Our Soldiers** committee met at Judy's home and re-named the project. It is now, **Stars for Hero's**. Karen and Connie had been remarkably busy getting the items for the **Stars for Hero's** to be assembled. Six of us made up 250 **Stars for Hero's** pocket favors and had a wonderful time visiting while we cut, stapled, stuffed, and labeled.



Connie ordered baggies, holiday paper, and card stock from Amazon. The card stock was not strong enough to hold the staples so Connie asked Staples if they would donate stronger card stock. They agreed to donate the stock and cut it to our specifications as well! Go Connie!



We needed 350 **Stars for Hero's**. 50 for the State Veterans Hospital, 75 for VA Home residents and 225 for **Socks and Cookies**. So on Sat. Oct. 24, **Make A**

I am part of our "American Flag" that has flown over a home or business in the USA. I can no longer fly. The sun and winds have caused me to become tattered and torn. Please carry me as a reminder that you are not forgotten.

Difference Day, they met with Shannon Modisette of Socks and Cookies and delivered 225 **Stars for Heroes** pocket favors, 225 Christmas cards that members had put a personal greeting in, 800 pieces of candy from Mars, 54 paperback books, and 181 bags of beef jerky. Some of our deployed military will get a lovely Christmas surprise.



The **Stars for Hero's** committee would like to give thanks to: Vella and her husband for the use their State Farm Office as a pick-up and drop-off point. Mars, through Janet, for their contribution of candy. The DEB Project for the donation of jerky. Arvest Bank and American Legion Post 77 in Bentonville for the donation of flags needing retirement. And Staples for providing and cutting the heavy-duty card stock.

Pictured are club members Connie, Valerie, Gay, Kris, Karen R, Judy, and Socks and Cookies' Shannon Modisette

The virtual Altrusa Benediction was given by Valerie.

Sugar Creek Laundry's **Loads of Learning** may be different during a pandemic, but we can adapt! Our bookshelf elves made sure the bookshelf was loaded and ready for a parent to pick out free books to take home for their children. Still the same, free laundry, free children's books, and now a free supper sent home in a sack. Thanks to Sugar Creek Laundry for letting us join them, doing good in our community.



The **Oct. 20**. President Kris opened our meeting with this **Altrusa Accent...** The person who deserves the most pity is a lonesome one on a rainy day who doesn't know how to read. *Benjamin Franklin*

Connie let us know that former member Su Lynn Hanson, is coordinating a joint effort with the DAR and our Club to collect and distribute books as part of **National Service Day**.

Gail told us of a request from the principal at **Northside Elementary School** in Decatur for input on the **One District, One Book Program**. We decided not to endorse this as members thought it would be a hardship for the schools, at this Covid-19 time, to get the same book to all students, in all grades, to be read by them or to them, at the same time. Social distancing would make it almost impossible.

Our program today was given by Lorri Healey the **Arkansas Statewide Chapter Director of Days for Girls**. She is also our Liaison and a member of the Rogers Altrusa Club. She thanked us for our support by providing sergers, sewing machines, thread, ribbon, panties, fabric, light weight irons, and our *time* and *effort*. During the 1980's she was a traveling nurse and observed first-hand how a lack of knowledge about menstruation, conception, and feminine hygiene created severe problems in countries around the world. Still today, girls and women in some cultures are forced to experience isolation during their menstrual periods. The lack of education often leads them to a high-risk pregnancy. Days for Girls International will provide the two millionth kit in December of this year.

With proper care, the kits will last 3 to 5 years. When the kits are presented, the girls and women attend a class where they learn how to take care of the kits, the basics of self-defense, what menstruation is, and how conception occurs. They learn that menstruation isn't a disease or curse but a gift that allows women to become mothers. Financial donations are always appreciated. If you want to donate, make the check out to Days for Girls International and in the subject line write DFG Rogers AR Chapter. That will ensure that Lorrie receives the donation. At the end of the presentation, Lorrie received a virtual \$500 donation from the Club. Vella will give a real check to Judy who will take it to Lorrie. Lorrie was very thankful and explained that the funds would be used to provide heavy flow kits to a maternity hospital in Venezuela.

There will be **NO MEETING ON NOVEMBER 3RD BECAUSE of ELECTION DAY**, so get out and vote!

The virtual Altrusa Benediction was given by Valerie.

Bits and Pieces... Jesse Ryan Sterling, Sue's grandson, was born on August 26. He weighed in at 5 lbs. 5 oz. Judy's 5th great grandchild was born last week. She is Ophelia and weighed 7 lbs. 7 oz.

Kris is moving to a home next door to Judy in Rogers.

Peggy is traveling to Las Vegas and Mexico.

We sent former member Jenny Montgomery a card in sympathy for the death of her husband.

Linda and her husband recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a week in Las Vegas.

Gail's son in Missouri is out of the hospital and has returned to work on a part-time basis.

Our prayers are with Ann Marie's granddaughter who is living with a rare disease.

Thanks again to Connie and Sue for their help in putting this newsletter together.

Valerie Katz: Communications valeriekatz567@aol.com Meetings are held at 11:30 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month, via Zoom Our web-site altrusa-bb.com See us on Facebook www.facebook.com/altrusa8