



What Happened?

News and Information about our Club.

Bentonville/Bella Vista

July / August 2021



- July August Birthdays**
- July 16 Pat Sporleder
 - July 19 Connie Brown
 - July 29 Linda Krysl
 - July 29 Terri Gaither
 - Aug, 22 Carrie Schweer

President: Connie Brown cbrown0719@aol.com

A Note from our President- Summer is ending and we're looking forward to fall and our beautiful NWA fall colors. September means Dictionary Project, Spaghetti Dinner, School Book Swaps and World Literacy Day. This year, again, we're working around Covid. Our Spaghetti Dinner has just been postponed - not cancelled - we're just on pause! The Committee has worked hard on planning and will monitor the situation closely. I predict a bigger and better Spaghetti Dinner than we've ever had - when the time is right!! We're still having our events but within restrictions set by our partners. Covid has taught us flexibility for sure. When it gets a little cooler, I hope we can have our regular meetings outside socially distanced in a park. We really miss being together!!

Our new Altrusa Intl. President Kathy Folley from District Nine (Texas) has chosen the theme for her biennium "United We Can" - I'll add "Flexible We Are" to that. We are a strong Club, and we will get through Covid together. We need to be innovative for sure!!

Thanks so much for your understanding!!

Connie Brown

On Saturday, **July 3rd**, we volunteered for **OZ KIDS Bike and Book Fest** at the **Bentonville Public Library**. They were hoping for 500 entrants and stopped counting at 900! This event spotlighted children, bikes, and literacy. There were multiple stations for learning, books, art, along with food stations, and music. Children who showed up without a bike were given a bike and a helmet to take home. After the event was over there were many children who went in and got their library card. It was a very exciting day!



Our **July 6** meeting was at Gussano's Restaurant. The meeting was called to order by President Connie with this **Altrusa Accent...** Serve to Change Others and Ourselves. It will be our Club's theme this year.

The Club will meet at Gussano's until further notice. Many places were contacted to check their availability and requirements for monthly meetings. Gussano's, does not charge a fee and does not require that everyone at the meeting order food. And it is in a relatively convenient location for most members!

We are growing! Christina Bush and Carrie Schweer were initiated into our Club by Gay with a theme connecting migrating geese with Club membership. It focused on how geese benefit and help each other by flying together in a V formation and having a couple of birds stay with any members of the group that are injured and must leave the formation.

As a group we can accomplish more than we can individually because we work in a common direction and step up to support each other. Gay related to our new members that they didn't join Altrusa, they have become Altrusans. Christina and Carrie were then given a Club Yearbook, a binder of Altrusa information, a name badge, Altrusa pin, and a free lunch! We are incredibly pleased that Christina and Carrie want to fly with us.



Club members then had an opportunity to review the Operating and Foundation budgets. After a brief discussion, both budgets were voted on and approved. Gay pointed out that we are fortunate to have carry-over funds in our Foundation account which we can use this year if needed. We need to be aware that this is unusual, and we can't assume it will always be there.

Gay informed us that the Audit Committee met, and the audits of the Operating and Foundation accounts were both accurate, and complete. **Yay!**

Gail reported that she contacted the libraries we work with and the Decatur Elementary School to let them know about the Friends of the Bentonville Library Big Top Children's Book Sale that will take place August 5th to 9th. This is a huge event and offers great deals on books.



July 7th found Karen R. at the celebration of the merger of the Single Parent Scholarship Funds of Benton County and



Northwest Arkansas. We have long been supporters of the one in Benton County. We enjoyed hearing the stories from students Heather and Hillary. Congratulations to Tyler Clark the new CEO. Karen Robbins, our Club's liaison, is on the left in the group picture with the SPSF staff. We look forward to a continued partnership with this organization. Karen will let us know about potential ways to help this merged organization in the future.

Karen R. had some news about our **Support Our Soldiers** project. We received an anonymous gift of 60 large bookbags with 4 different patriot designs and 150 fleece blanket-like pieces of yardage from the American Legion in Rogers. The plan is to put them together along with our flag pocket favors and give them to veterans for Veteran's Day. A workshop is planned for October 16th at Anne-Marie's home.

The plans for the **Spaghetti Dinner** were underway. Anne-Marie and the committee met at St. Bernard's Church to begin planning and were advised that, due to the increase in Covid-19 instances the church has cancelled all activities for the next few weeks! The hope is to reschedule soon.

Then, Connie described her lengthy search for ground beef at an inexpensive price. Finally, she talked to **Tyson Foods** who also said no, no beef. She received a call the next day! Tyson had made a special order from their suppliers, and they donated 80 pounds of ground beef! The beef had to be delivered to us right away, so she arranged to have the frozen meat stored in the freezer at the **Deb Project**. Great job Connie



Gay passed out calling cards that members can use to promote our Club. Connie,



Karen R. and Valerie passed them out at the appreciation event after the **OZ KIDS Bike and Book Fest**. Teresa Stafford, President of the **Bentonville Library Foundation** (on the right in turquoise), invited all the volunteers to a thank you BBQ. Carla and husband Bob joined us for the event. Carla is a tireless member of our club who can be found at most of our events.

July 13 found Carrie, Carla, Valerie, Tina, Connie, and Karen R. at the **DEB Project** presenting Sammy Laney (3rd from the left) with our first ever "**Community Partner Award**". Sammy recounted some of the heartwarming things the DEB Project is doing. Her tale about a therapy dog they donated to a girl who was born in a crack house was extremely touching. Sammy could use our help the week after Labor Day when the store will be closed to do a reset for fall and winter.



The **DEB Fashion Show** fundraiser was to be held on September 25th but has been delayed due to Covid. The store has been redecorated, to look more like a boutique than a thrift store. Sammy needs donations of furniture to display the on-line pieces and household goods. She is looking for darker, farmhouse style items. Discounts are now being offered, to move clothing, to get ready for the fall re-set. Large amounts of

clothes are being donated to Good Will, so they can be “recycled/reused”. Volunteers are requested, to help move boxes of clothing, to the Bentonville or Bella Vista locations. (no lifting required)

We received a donation of 15 boxes of adult books from the **DEB Project**. Many were given to the Bella Vista Library. Providence School in Rogers is doing a food drive for the **DEB** pantry.

Our **July 20**, meeting was called to order at Gussano’s by President Connie with this **Altrusa Accent...** We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone. *Ronald Reagan*

We had guests! Linda’s sister Diana Harris joined us. And Terri McClure, a former member of an Altrusa Club in Omaha, Nebraska decided to come to a meeting after seeing publicity about us in the local newspaper. Gail’s friend and a fellow author Donna Hanson was there. She is a Co-Director of the Bella Vista Village Writers and Poets group. She spoke briefly to recommend that we consider doing something as community outreach that involves children and writing,

With a flourish, Connie announced that we, again this year, were named a **Distinguished Club!** We received a pin be placed on our banner from Altrusa International in recognition of this honor. The award is based on all we do in our community and were able to continue doing through the Covid pandemic.

Sue McEvoy, who was unable to come to our last meeting, was initiated into Club membership by Gay. She referred to the Altrusa logo, *Leading to a Better Community* and to the Altrusa motto: *Patriotism, Efficiency, Service*. She cited two of the twelve Altrusa principles: *Altrusa develops true leadership, concerned with accomplishment and not with recognition and Altrusa believes it is not enough to be good; Altrusan’s must be good for something*. She ended by telling Sue, you don’t join Altrusa, you become an Altrusan. We all are very pleased to have Sue in our Club.



Gail had information on the local libraries. The **Bella Vista Library’s** Summer Reading Program is about to end. We had committed to providing a book to all participants. They had requested a total of 240 books. We gave them 344! (100 adult books and 244 children’s books). She met with **Gravette Library’s** Karen Benson and talked about setting up a writer’s group. Kudos to Gail, she has sorted and put Altrusa stickers on all those recently acquired books!

Our **Aug, 3**, meeting at Gussano’s Restaurant was called to order by President Connie with the following **Altrusa Accent...** The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing. *Walt Disney*

Guest Jean Melton was introduced. She is new to the area and is looking for potential ways to learn about and serve the community.

Connie announced that Terri McClure, who was a guest at our last meeting, has joined our Club. She will be initiated at our next meeting. Welcome Terri!

\$\$\$ Connie reported for Vella that the July 2021 Foundation Account balance was \$16,956.29.

Operating Treasurer Karen M. reported that the July 2021 Operating Account balance was \$4,310.55. The Petty Cash balance at the end of July 2021 was \$131.63.

Connie reported for the **Literacy Committee** that new member Sue McEvoy has donated a supply of new books!

Christina has found a permanent home for her food truck, The Meatin' Place, in Decatur at 252 N. Main Street. She is doing a school supply drive for the Decatur schools.

The **Board of Directors** met, and Gay related the items the Board discussed. We will apply for an Altrusa International grant asking for funds to obtain Days for Girls supplies and materials, books in Spanish, and other appropriate items and ship them to Venezuela. Gay will write the proposal with the help of Karen M. and Connie. Lorrie Healy of the Rogers Days for Girls Club has already supplied a proposed budget.

Connie reported for the **Literacy Committee** that: We currently share a storage unit with Kris Sherry; however, we are using most of the space. Though Kris has not indicated that she will no longer need the unit, we should be prepared for a change. If anyone knows how we might get a donated, enclosed trailer (like a horse trailer) we could park it in a trailer park for a reasonable amount.



Aug. 5. Megan Lewis-Reed from Altrusa of Washington Co. established a book box as well as a food box in front of her home. We periodically give her books to help restock! So, Connie delivered books to help Megan fill her empty book box! Nothing better than Altrusans helping Altrusans!!



Aug. 9 Bentonville Friends of the Library thanked the multiple Altrusa members, for their help at their book sale. There were a bazillion children's books at the **Big Top Tent Sale!** We were excited to volunteer each day, cashing and restocking books!!



Our **Aug. 17.** Meeting was once again held via ZOOM and was called to order by President Connie with the following Altrusa Accent... **How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time!!!** *Author Unknown.*

Our Program was presented by **Cindy Ford, President of the Board of Arkansas Veterans Village**. Cindy presented the goal of AVV, which is to get homeless veterans off the street. AVV works as a liaison, between the VA and veteran permanent/long-term housing. "Standing in the Gap", the AVV provides transitional housing, laundry, counseling, etc., for approximately 5 days during the gap between housing. So far, 62 veterans have been served, at Wood Spring Suites, in Fayetteville, Springdale and Bentonville.

How can we help? Donations and/or volunteer hours for their Annual Golf Tournament fundraiser! 90% of all donations, go to the veterans.

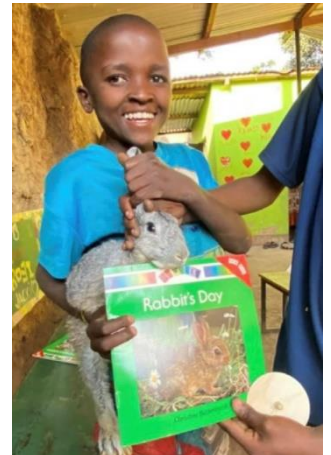
The **Bella Vista Library** thanked the club, for donations to their Summer Reading Program.

Janet is waiting for most schools to make decisions on their interest in receiving **dictionaries**. Decatur let us know they would like to participate.

Aug. 30. We took books for Tanzania, Africa the first 40 miles and our friend missionary Melody Taylor took them the other 6,000 miles to Tanzania! Melody reports that weekends are spent with orphan children in one of the children's homes nearby. They live in such poverty they barely have enough to survive. "Bringing books, craft activities, providing meals, and taking them to share is a highlight of our time here. When we read about the rabbits along with chickens and a goat, they are raising on their own there is never a dull moment. Thank you to Altrusa Bentonville/Bella Vista and Altrusa Fayetteville for donating these colorful books for me to share with the children."



We are making a difference in our part of the world as well as across the globe.



We have a **vacancy in the Vice President position** and need to determine how we will fill the President position next June. Ideally, we will have a Vice President before then who will become President. There was discussion at the Board meeting that some members may be hesitant to take on an officer position because it is a two-year commitment. At today's meeting, the past presidents who were there were all in agreement that having a two-year term allows the vice president and president to get fully engaged in the position. Having to change every year would make for a *choppy* transition every year. Every member is asked to **think long and hard about what you want to do next year**. And please keep in mind The Vice President is trained and mentored by the President.



Everyone is there to support you. We have a strong Club with active members. The president doesn't need to micromanage committees. If you can't fulfill a particular task, there is always someone to step in. In terms of District Eight and Altrusa International, you can get as involved as you want. If you routinely travel, you can still be vice president and president. Others have done it.

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR FEEDBACK TO CONNIE.



Bits and Pieces

Tina has possibly been exposed to COVID and is quarantining. Our thoughts are with her.

Marion has been seriously ill and was hospitalized for a week. She is now in a rehabilitation hospital; she will be there another 3 weeks. Cards may be sent to: *Everest Rehab Hospital, 4313 S. Pleasant Crossing Blvd., Room 103, Rogers, 72758*

Anne-Marie is excited that her son and his family will move here from California.

Anne-Marie's granddaughter will start chemotherapy at the University of Iowa. We offer our prayers for success.

Carla is having gall bladder surgery.

Sue McEvoy is in Branson, with her nephew who is sick with Covid-19.

Many thanks to Connie and Sue for their help in putting this newsletter together.

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Our web-site altrusa-bb.com See us on Face book www.facebook.com/altrusa8