

What Happened?

News and Information about our Club.

Bentonville/Bella Vista

Sept./Oct. 2021



Sept. /Oct. Birthdays

Sept. 1 Donna Williams

Sept. 17 Sue Sterling

Sept. 26 Gail Cowden

Oct. 10 Peggy Rosenthal

President Connie Brown [_cbrown0719@aol.com](mailto:cbrown0719@aol.com)

A Note from our President- We are finishing up 2021 - another year with Covid challenges. We enter the holiday seasons with thankfulness.

I'm thankful we were flexible in meeting by Zoom, in the park and at Gussano's. We were flexible and we flourished!! We completed service projects with porch pickups and drop offs, parking lot trunk transfers, in our own home workshops and a parade to different libraries. During Covid we continued to earn the Distinguished Club recognition from Altrusa Intl. We also gained new members during strange and uncharted times!

We are thankful to be meeting in person again - we so missed being together!

I'm thankful for a strange year that made us think outside the box and learn different ways - yes, it's been challenging!!

I'm thankful for each and every one of you and the skills you bring to our Altrusa table. Enjoy the holidays!!
Connie Brown

Our **Sept. 7** meeting via Zoom was called to order by President Connie with this **Altrusa Accent...** *Limit your "Always" and your "Nevers"!*

Connie reported for the **Literacy Committee** that The **Bentonville Friends of the Library Foundation** appreciated our help. They netted \$7,700 from their Big Top Children's Book Sale! The funds will go toward the library expansion project.

Sept. 8 was **International Literacy Day**. We celebrated it on Sept. 16, starting at the **Bella Vista Library** at 10 a.m. and then traveling to the **Gravette Library** for a presentation at 11 a.m. We donated 30 new children's books to the Bella Vista Library and 30 children's books and 100 adult books to the Gravette Library. And we heard what is happening at the libraries! Those ladies are awesome! At Gravette they are teaching sewing and plan to teach canning when they get more room for a stove! They have discovered that their building has a second story, so they are planning to "Grow up!" They have been chosen by NASA as a NASA library. What an honor! Gail read a thank you note received from Ellen at the **Bella Vista Library**. She said many of the titles donated had been on their order wish list!



Bella Vista Library

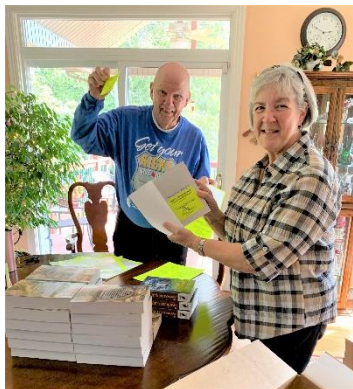


Gravette Library

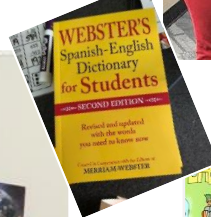
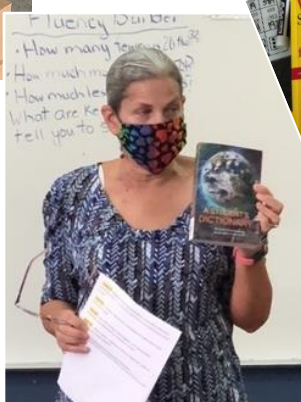


The **DEB Project** was collecting get well cards for a local Girl Scout troop to send to hospitalized Covid patients. Sammy could use home décor items to place in that section of the boutique. The DEB Project's computer system crashed! They had to have a new system installed and then had to re-inventory their merchandise.. Sammy is getting used to the new computer system and she appreciated the help from volunteers. She could use help sorting and hanging clothing. Do you have a few hours to help? The food pantry is low, and a church will help with that in November.

Janet's Dictionary Committee surveyed 15 schools that had participated in the **Dictionary Project** in the past. 9 of the schools were excited about continuing the project. The Bentonville School District did not allow outsiders or parents to enter the building, so our part was just to deliver the dictionaries to their door. Decatur Elementary did allow the formal presentations and Karen M. reported that in addition to the dictionaries, Decatur received coats, backpacks, and other items. The staff was thrilled! All dictionaries have been delivered and we really appreciated the help given by Mars.



^
Valerie's
friend
Bob
helped!



On **Oct. 5** our meeting was held at the Park Springs Park. President Connie called us to order with the following **Altrusa Accent...** Out of adversity comes opportunity. *Benjamin Franklin.*

\$\$\$ Club Foundation Treasurer Vella reported our balance, after the payment of \$4350 for the Dictionary Project and the \$106.76 payment for the Yearbook printing, was \$12,388.71.

The **Altrusa International Service Committee** challenge is to give away 1 million books between June 2021 and May 31, 2023. Each club is being asked to give away 500 books or submit 500 volunteer hours. We can meet that easily since we have already given away 2500 books since June!

Anne-Marie reported that, after many negotiations, she Bernard's could not come to an agreement on a date for **Dinner** this year. October 11 has been scheduled for next



and St. the **Spaghetti** year.

Oct. 10 found Carla, Karen R., Valerie, and Tina serving yummy treats to the guests at the **Bentonville Library Foundation's** tribute to Billie McGaugh and the dedication of the McGaugh Family Literacy Area.



The **Bella Vista Public Library** didn't have their usual Spooktacular this year. They had a celebration on Saturday, October 30th with three stations for activities outdoors. One of the stations was our own Gail Cowdin as "Grannie Boo" reading Halloween and spooky stories.

Oct. 23 was **National Make A Difference Day**. The Bentonville Library Foundation hosted the **Oz Kids Bikes and Book Fall Festival** and we were happy to help! The estimated audience was 1200. The event had a fall festival theme with free books, music, pumpkin painting, hay bales, and food!



This was a family friendly event! They had Bike Races with groups starting at 2 years old. Parents and volunteers cheered and rang cowbells as the racers approached the finish line. For those who did not have them, bikes and helmets were provided by **Pedal It Forward**. Each entry that finished the race was awarded a medal!

Our **Oct. 19** meeting was held at Park Springs Park in Bentonville. President Connie called us to order with this **Altrusa Accent...** The best way to get started is to quit talking and start doing! *Walt Disney*



Karen R. met with Connie to discuss possible activities for the Club's **Support Our Soldiers** project. Doing something to focus on women veterans and combining a women veterans' activity with membership recruitment. Also, having the club participate in celebrating Wreaths Across America.

Gay and Karen M. completed a grant proposal for work that our Club will do with **Days for Girls** in 2022. Grant awards were announced, and we got ours! \$2,000 from the **Altrusa International Foundation** and we will contribute \$400 for us to help make the kits which will be sent to Venezuela. We are committing to having great Club participation in 2022! **The grant says 100% of the club must be participating.**

Lorrie is still preparing **Days for Girls** project tubs for people to pick up and complete at home. Emphasizing that you do not need to sew, Connie and Judy encouraged members to consider helping out. There are lots of opportunities to help. (For example, just tying knots!). Valerie had an appointment to learn how to use the machine that cuts the squares. When we started this program Valerie thought we were just going to make 100 kits. Boy was she wrong! Our Liaison Lorrie Healy has all but turned her home into a **Days for Girls** production center. She keeps an eye on everything to make sure they are done correctly. Only certain fabrics may be used, and no people or animals may be on them. Valerie says the fabrics needs to ironed before she puts them through the cutter and after two days she had ironed more doing this than she has since the invention of permanent press! This is a big and worthwhile program. Want to help?



Karen R and Connie recommended that we go to SparkofHope2021.org and watch the video of scholarship recipients discussing all the positive things they received from the **Single Parent Scholarship Fund**.

Karen R. had news about the **Single Parent Scholarship Fund**. Due to the SPSF changes, this year's **Festival of Giving** will be done quite differently. Contributors are asked to donate cash (as opposed buying gifts or gift cards) as well as wrapping paper and ribbon. The single parent will receive cash (\$100 per person) for him/herself and each child. This year 71 recipients and their 126 children signed up for help through the Festival of Giving. Since \$500 is budgeted for this, club members agreed this was worth supporting.

On the **Communications** front, Valerie reported that we got publicity, including a picture, in *The Weekly Vista* and the *Democrat Gazette* for our dictionary donations.

Jeff Hairston, **Operations Director of Open Avenues**, spoke to us about this program which assists people with disabilities in learning job and personal skills and providing them with employment. They currently have 72 clients. There were 90 – 100 pre COVID. Some employers provide the materials and then clients do the job at the Open Avenues facility. Their goal is for some clients ultimately to be able to go to a job outside the facility. The organization sometimes get involved in their clients' personal needs – food, housing, family support.

The biggest challenge he sees is to combat those uninformed people who might view their activity as a “sweat shop” since some clients don't earn much. He explained that Open Avenues follows the Department of Labor guidelines on pay. Each year he surveys companies in the area that do light assembly and packaging to determine what the average pay is per hour. Ultimately he calculates a rate per piece. They are enthusiastic about earning a paycheck. Besides making clients feel as though they are part of the work force, their coming to Open Avenues often allows their home caretakers to work.

Right now he is looking for an employee to drive one of their buses from 6:30 am – 8:30 am and 3 pm – 5 pm each day. If you know someone with a CDL who would fit the position, please have them call Jeff. You can find out more by going to openavenues.org

What to Do for Our December Gathering!! We only have one meeting in December and that is a social event. The date this year is December 7. Members at the Nov. 2 meeting voted to have a potluck.

Bits and Pieces

Yay! Carla is back after gallbladder surgery.

Boo! Linda announced that she is moving to Columbia, Missouri, in the middle of October. We are sad to see to see her go. However, having family nearby can enhance one's life. We wish her much happiness ahead.

Valerie has another great grandson, Ezra.

Connie shared the email from John about Marian Eagles health issues. She's had pneumonia and after being sent to a rehab hospital was sent to Highlands Rehab. Is not there now. Connie will try to deliver a blanket for her as a donation from the club.

Valerie has a new great-grandson (Ezra)

Anne Marie got a video from her granddaughter asking her to come visit.

Carla's grandson is thinking about moving to Arkansas with his family.

Sue McEvoy has a great great nephew and great great niece

Gail has a great nephew “on the way”.

Connie and Carla each recently visited Marian Eagle. Connie took her the blanket. They said she seemed like herself again.

Valerie spent the weekend in Sim Valley, California at her granddaughter's wedding.

Karen Robbins' great granddaughter Jada is 15 today. Karen will spend some time with her.

Valerie Katz: Communications valeriekatz567@aol.com

Meetings are held at 11:30 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month. Our web-site altrusa-bb.com

Please see us on Face book www.facebook.com/altrusa8 Connie does a wonderful job!