



# What Happened?

## News and Information about our Club.

Jan. / Feb. 2022



### Jan. / Feb. Birthdays

Jan 26 Karen McAuley

Jan 26 Vella Lewis

Feb. 12 Anne-Marie Steeneck

Feb. 22 Sue McEvoy

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

**A Note from our President...** It's exciting to have our Games Day right around the corner!! Auction items are being collected, chance baskets are being assembled and table reservations are being made - we're almost ready!! It's a day of hard work but lots of fun!!

I'm excited to put in-person meetings, workshops and volunteer projects on our calendar!! Spring is almost here and we're ready to spring into action!!

It's so exciting to be in person!! Take care and see you soon!!! *Connie Brown*

**Jan. 4.** Oh Dear...we are back to Zoom. President Connie called the meeting to order with the following **Altrusa Accent...** We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day. *Edith Lovejoy Pierce*

**\$\$** Club Foundation Treasurer Vella Lewis had submitted a document showing that the November and December 2021 beginning Foundation Account balance was \$12,388.71; the ending Foundation Account balance was \$13,800.96

Club Operating Treasurer Karen McAuley that the Operating account did not change during November and December. The beginning and ending balance was \$4,290.85. The petty cash balance also did not change during November and December. The beginning and ending balance was \$129.63.

New Member reduced membership price began December 1<sup>st</sup> and lasts until March 31<sup>st</sup>. The regular price of \$135 is reduced to \$97.50. New members age 30 and under are \$97.50 the year round.



Connie reported that after a book drive led by the Librarian at the **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School**, we received a large donation of books from Thomas Jefferson Elementary, Elm Tree Elementary, and Ardis Ann Middle School.

Gay reported that Lorrie Healy, our **Days for Girls** liaison, is working on an action plan for the grant we received for her from **Altrusa International**. We have received the \$2,000 check from Altrusa International and will combine it with our \$400 to fulfill our grant proposal. Laurie is coordinating with Days for Girls International to use their tax-exempt number in making purchases so that all the funds go directly to items Laurie needs. Funds will be dispersed when needed.

Our grant proposal included providing kits to Venezuela; however, due to shipping problems we are unable to send things there. If this situation continues the kits will go to another country. We will make sure that the Altrusa Foundation knows of any changes and the reasons for them. Judy reported that Lorrie usually has fabric that needs to be laundered. She has baskets ready for anyone who will help. She will loan a serger to work on kits at home or you can work at Lorrie's. She will set you up with social distancing if you request it.

She will provide specific information about what we all must do to meet the goals that were set out in the grant proposal that we submitted. Club workshops will be in the plan.

Valerie reported that Lorrie is looking for someone with a zig-zag stitch on their sewing machine who would be willing to do some sewing and doesn't mind repetitive work.

Sue reported that **Game Day** is fast approaching! She will send out a flyer for the event. For the first time we are asking people who attend to bring along any books they'd like to donate.

She and her **Game Day Committee** reported on decisions they had made. Table will be \$60/table of four -- \$15/person. Baskets will be assembled on Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, set-up will be on March 8<sup>th</sup>. For tax purposes, Vella can provide a Donation Receipt for items given to the event. Karen reported the need for baskets and items to place in them. Possible themes are wine, Mother's Day, Father's Day, pets. Be creative!

Anne-Marie reported that we need more expensive items for the silent auction. She will store the items and will pick them up if members can't bring them to a meeting. She and Pat will sell table tickets at St. Bernard's Church and advertise our event in the church bulletin. She'd like to get the baskets as soon as possible so that we won't have to buy some at the last minute. You can call Karen M. and she'll pick them up, or you can drop them off at Vella's State Farm Office at 2832 Bella Vista Way in Bella Vista. You can also drop off themed items for the baskets.

If you have items for the Silent Auction, you can either call Anne Marie who will pick them up or drop them off at the State Farm Office. Be sure to label them with your name and the estimated value and a recommended starting bid.

*Because this is a Club sponsored fundraiser, everyone is expected to participate.*

Our **Jan 18** meeting was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by President Connie with the following **Altrusa Accent...** *Today only happens once – make it amazing!!*

**Jan 19.** Karen M. loaded coats, hats, water bottles and 3 boxes of books and took them to the **Decatur Elementary School**. Many thanks all around from the school, even though she could not do an in-person book distribution this month



due to Covid. Much of the clothing was from The DEB Project. The teachers quickly started handing out warm jackets.

Karen R. let us know that the Single **Parent Scholarship Fund** applications for summer school are being taken until March 15<sup>th</sup> and applications for fall will be taken starting April 15<sup>th</sup>. If you know of any single parent who is thinking about going back to school, please alert them to the Single Parent Scholarship Fund. The average GPA of individuals receiving scholarships is 3.34! She read *Thank You* notes that we received from recipients of our donation to the Giving Tree Project.

On the **Communications** front, Valerie reported that she has submitted an article for the District Service Bulletin, an article about books going to Decatur, and an article about our work with Days for Girls to the two local newspapers.

Our **program** today was presented by **Paula George, Executive Director of Autism Involves Me, (AIM)** which assists families who are struggling with or just received a diagnosis of autism. She started out as a volunteer with the organization in 2008.

She told us that the sooner autism is diagnosed, the better the chance for independence. AIM provides grants to families so that they can purchase things that insurance doesn't cover. This has included swimming lessons and a trampoline. It also provides grants for classroom materials for teachers who work with autistic children. They host sensory sensitive events. One example is that they rented a movie theater. During the movie the lights were not completely off, the volume was lower than normal, and kids were allowed to move about. The autism spectrum includes a wide range of differences ranging from individuals who will never speak or be able to live on their own to savants. And their funding is all donor-based. The website is <https://www.aimnwa.org> You may reach Paula at 479-381-5570.

We had a visit with **Lorraine Brewer** the President of the Altrusa Fayetteville Club, the Governor-Elect of District Eight and an instructor in the University of Arkansas Chemistry and Biochemistry Department. And the liaison between our Club and District Eight!

She joined our ZOOM meeting and congratulated our Club on the grants we received for Days for Girls and the Single Parent Scholarship Fund and winning the Governor's Book Challenge. She encouraged us to do more grant applications. She complemented our Club for member training and excellent media coverage. Gay explained the new member training process and Valerie explained how a visit to a newspaper helped us get on their radar and that the pictures she routinely sends gets us publicity. She encouraged us to attend the District Conference in Fort Smith in April, and to consider serving at the District level.

She asked what the District could do to help during the COVID-created challenges. We replied, information on what other clubs are doing for fundraising would be a big help! She let us know that Governor Penny Storm is setting up a District Literacy Task Force. Let Connie know if you'd like to be considered as a member.

Connie read the Altrusa benediction.

Our **Feb. 1** meeting was once again held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by President Connie with the following **Altrusa Accent...** *Do what you love and do it often!!*

Tina gave us an update on the **DEB Project**. Sammy is working on a new brochure which she hopes will be done by the end of this month. A major clean-up and reorganization of the store was done. Fifty-two

children were aided by the Christmas Tree Project. Sammy would like to thank us for our support with a special shout out to Judy Goddard who volunteers at the store Tuesdays through Fridays and Connie and her husband who routinely pick up items and drop them off at Goodwill and Helping Hands. And, the DEB Project gave us a supply of books and is on the look-out for baskets for us for use at Game Day!

On January 22<sup>nd</sup> a group of teenagers from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints did a great job of working at the store. The need for the **DEB Project** continues to grow. The Project gave 7,791 items to 663 people in 2020. In 2021, 14,881 items were given to 770 people. The foster care community is really struggling right now. There's a lot more needs than there are resources. One way to help is to provide gift cards from Walmart, restaurants, grocery stores or gas cards. Diapers (all sizes) and formula are also in great need since these items are often out of stock on the shelves.

On April 5, instead of a regular meeting, we will volunteer at the **DEB Project** from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by lunch at the Acropolis.

Valerie reported that she is working on the yearbook which will be submitted for recognition to the District Eight Conference.

Connie read the Altrusa benediction.

Our **Feb. 15** meeting was called to order at the *Bella Vista Library* by President Connie with the following **Altrusa Accent...** *Life is more fun if you play games!! AND Life is a game – play it!!*

Gail is working with Karen Benson of the Gravette Library on an **Altrusa International Foundation** grant proposal for their summer program.

We will acknowledge Dr. Seuss' Birthday and National Read Across America Day with a parade and book delivery. The parade will start at 10:00 at the Thomas Jefferson Elementary School. Then at 10:30 it will be at the Bella Vista Library. It will be at the Gravette Library at 11:15 followed by lunch at the Mexican restaurant in Gravette. Join any or all of the parade.

Karen Robbins reported for **Support Our Soldiers**. At the first meeting in June we will gather the fleece blankets, the stars we made, and other appropriate things and give them to the **Benton County Veterans Services Office** so that they can present them to veterans on Flag Day.

Gay has learned from Lorrie Healy (**Days for Girls**) that everything has been worked out with Days for Girls International in terms of accepting our grant funds as a donation. Lorrie will let Gay know where to find the underwear for the kits. Gay will purchase some and will be reimbursed from the grant funds. We should look for sales of cotton flannel and quiltable cotton in bold patterns with dark colors. Three of our members routinely help Days for Girls. Valerie cuts, Judy launders, and Connie matches pieces. On **March 26** we will have a Days for Girls Workshop at Lorrie's house 1-4 p.m.

Karen Robbins reported for the **Nominating Committee**. Gay Kiker has agreed to step up to the president post for the 2022-2023 term. This is only a one-year term so that we can get our terms in sync with District Eight's. The following have consented to be officers for the 2022-2023 term . President – Gay Kiker, Recording Secretary – Sue Sterling, Corresponding Secretary – Tina Brandt, Operating Treasurer – Karen McCauley, Foundation Treasurer – Vella Lewis, Directors – Terri Gaither and Pat Sporleder. Club members will vote on officers at a future meeting.

**We don't want to put our Club's existence in jeopardy by not having a president in 2023.** We need someone to be Gay's vice president and be president for the 2023-2025 term. Members, please, please step up to this challenge. You could not possibly be mentored by anyone better than Gay and Connie has a whole binder of help and suggestions. We are doing wonderful work in our community, and we want to continue. Plus, all our members are there to help our vice president and president. Committees are strong and do not require that our president manage them.

**If you are interested in serving our Club** by taking this leadership position or learning more about what is involved, please contact a member of the nominating committee – Karen R, Tina , or Peggy.

*Plan to attend the District Eight Conference in late April. It will inspire you!*

### **Executive Board Action on Foundation Bylaws and Policies**

Sue Sterling reported that on January 18, 2022, the Executive Board passed a motion to amend our Foundation Bylaws and to put our Foundation Policies in writing. Club members need to vote on these changes.

Gay explained that the Altrusa International Foundation had requested that clubs examine their Foundation Bylaws and Policies to make sure that they were following the International Foundation. She had made the comparison and then made the recommendations for changes. One change is that after the Club elects Foundation Board members, those members will elect their own officers. Another change is that the Club President cannot serve on the Foundation Board. Regarding policies, Gay explained that we did not have written Foundation Policies in the past but had been operating under policies similar to what is in the Altrusa International Foundation Policies. *(But we have always done it this way was not going to cut it:).* She distributed information explaining all the changes.

Our program was given by Ellen Farwell, the **Children's Librarian at the Bella Vista Library**. She spoke about the upcoming events at the Library. In person story time for kids which had been done online. Their teen advisory board plans activities like relay races, games, and cooking. Teens ages 13-17 meet once a month. Their summer program will be themed Oceans of Possibilities. It will run from June 13<sup>th</sup> through July 22<sup>nd</sup>. In the past we have donated books for the participants of the summer program. This year we are invited to present the books in-person. The library is loaning their Dr. Seuss costume items for our clubs Game Day.

**See you on Game Day – Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at St. Bernard's Church!!**

Club members recited the Altrusa benediction.

### **Bits and Pieces**

Marian Eagle is home!

Judy's granddaughter earned her master's degree from the Colorado School of Mines. She has accepted a job in Oregon.

Anne-Marie's family was together during the holidays for the first time in 10 years.

A big **Thank you** to Gay for setting up our Zoom meetings and for hosting us at her home for our December gathering.

Terri Gaither's daughter is engaged.

Sue McEvoy has one new great, great nephew and a second one due to be delivered soon.

Gay will be at Disney World next week with her 10-year-old grandson.

**SAVE THE DATES! WE ARE GOING TO BE BUSY!**

March 2 – Dr. Seuss Birthday Parade to Thomas Jefferson Elementary School (10 a.m.) Bella Vista Library (10:30) and Gravette Library (11:15) followed by lunch if you'd like at the Mexican restaurant in Gravette. Come join any or all of the parade!

March 5 – Game Day Basket Assembly at St. Bernard's Catholic Church from 2-5 p.m.

March 8 – Game Day Set-up at St. Bernard's from 1- p.m.

March 9 – *Game Day*. We are there from 8:30 – 4.

March 16 – Book Swap at Thomas Jefferson Elementary School

March 26 - Days for Girls Workshop Lorrie's house 1-4 p.m.

April 5 – Instead of regular meeting, we will volunteer at the DEB Project from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by lunch at the Acropolis, if you'd like.

April 21-23 – Altrusa District Eight Conference, Fort Smith (Reminder: save your gently used jewelry, purses, scarves, etc. for our Club's Jewelry Store fundraiser at the Conference.)

April 21-23, 2022 - 66th Annual District Eight Conference – Fort Smith, Arkansas Smith (**Reminder:** save your gently used jewelry, purses, scarves, etc. for our Club's Jewelry Store fundraiser at the Conference.)

April 27-28, 2023 - 67th Annual District Eight Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma

April 25-27, 2024 - 68th Annual District Conference – Salina, KS

April 24-26, 2025 - 69th Annual District Conference, Missouri

June 7 – During the regular meeting we will assemble bags for veterans.

July 2 – Bentonville Library Bikes and Books Fest

July 19-22, 2023 - 58th Biennial Altrusa International Convention – San Antonio, Texas

July 22 – Bella Vista Library end of summer reading celebration.

October - Autism Involves Me (AIM) Walk

Valerie Katz: Communications [vikatz21@gmail.com](mailto:vikatz21@gmail.com)

Meetings are held at 11:30 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month via Zoom.

Our web-site [altrusa-bb.com](http://altrusa-bb.com) See us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/altrusa8](http://www.facebook.com/altrusa8)