What Happened?

News and Information about our Club.

Bentonville/Bella Vista

July /August 2026

ALTRUSA International | Leading to a Better Community®
Bentonville/Bella Vista AR Foundation, Inc.



July/August Birthdays

Connie Brown	July 19
Terrie Gaither	July 29
Linda Krysl	July 29
Robin Jara	Aug. 6
Barbara Zornes	Aug. 22

A Note from our Presidents, It's been a busy summer season for us all. Gay Kiker and Karen Robbins agreed to be co-presidents and the search for a new meeting place had members stepping up to the plate. Many of us have been traveling, many have been trying to stay cool. We helped with a Days for Girls workshop, we helped the DEB project get the store ready for the fall, and we supported several summer reading programs. But, with temps reaching the 100s and no rain in sight, we are all anxiously waiting for fall weather. Fall also brings our Spaghetti Dinner, book swaps, and library Halloween events. We're ready to get back into action and look forward to the upcoming holiday season.

The **July 7** meeting was called to order by co-President, Gay Kiker with the following **Altrusa Accent…** "*Don't wait for the perfect moment, take the moment and make it perfect."* Zoey Scyward





July 8 Summer reading includes a horse of course! And the summer reading program at the Sulphur Springs Library had one!

There is new interest in the **Dolly Parton Book Project!** Connie talked to the lady at the state level in Little Rock. This program will send a book a month to each child enrolled from birth to age 5. Only 13% of eligible children in Benton County are in the program. A discussion ensued regarding Altrusa helping to sign up children at any of the events where parents attend, such as Winterfest or library events. Connie and Gay had a zoom call with the Dolly Parton state coordinator. The state is still looking for a local partner to help raise funds and do the paperwork. Connie and Gay made several suggestions of local non-profits for her to reach out to, both for funding and administration. Benton County has the lowest participation in the state. Altrusa can get the word out to the schools, such as Decatur, in rural, poor areas, for families that might benefit from the program.

Our **Literacy Committee** is always busy! They work in our storage unit to organize, evaluate all requests for books, and sort the books we receive by age. When we need more books, that is a function of the literacy committee too. The Literacy committee will schedule a resorting day for all to *help*.

Our new Liaisons for libraries will be; Roxane Hipwell will take Decatur. Robin Jara will handle Bella Vista. Connie Brown will take Sulphur Springs, Gravette, and Bentonville, as she is at those libraries on a regular basis.

A $252 check was sent to International for **Club 52.** This is a camp for kids who are sick, i.e. with HIV, that might not have any other options.

The **July 21** meeting was a **Days for Girls** workshop held at the home of Lorrie Healey.

















Kathy Williamson and Connie Brown agreed to write a grant proposal for more funding for Days for Girls.

Members presented Lorrie Healey with a check for $2500. She was extremely grateful to Altrusa for our support both monetarily and hands-on. She desperately needs fabric and will use our donation to purchase it. On August 8 Lorrie and Kathy helped with a Back-to-School event for the distribution of the 100 kits our team worked on. This took place at the Yvonne Richardson Community Center in conjunction with the Squire Jehegan Outreach Center and the Pantry in Fayetteville.

The **August 4,** meeting was called to order by co-President, Karen Robbins with the following **Altrusa accent…**
"Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children." - Walt Disney

Altrusa International is having a challenge with the districts, from September 1 through November 30, to give away one book per member to earn a patch for our banner. *A piece of cake for this club!* We will have a book giveaway in September at **Decatur Elementary**. We can use our book giveaway to earn our patch.

The **August 18** meeting was at the home of Marlene Olafson. The meeting was called to order by co-President, Karen Robbins the following **Altrusa accent…** *"Happiness is not something readymade; it comes from your own actions."* - The Dalai Lama

$$$ Financial Reports:
Operating Budget - Karen McAuley reported our total is $8,599.23
Foundation Budget -Terri McClure reported our total is $12,372.10

Karen McAuley provided an overview of the proposed 2026-2027. **Operating Budget**. After discussion, the club approved.
Vella Lewis provided an overview of the proposed 2026-2027. **Foundation Budget.** After discussion, an amendment was proposed by Peggy Rosenthal to add Club 52 for $252. The motion was carried. The club approved the revised proposed Foundation Budget.

Terri Gather and Sue Sterling reviewed our accounts. All is in good order. Income and expenses are correctly reported. Terri McClure and Karen McAuley are doing a wonderful job!

Connie Brown let us know that Act 372 is not in effect yet. The court must issue another order before it goes into effect. The Sulphur Springs library has responded by closing their bookstore. And children under 18 are not allowed into the adult book section. Gravette library determined that only adults or children 16-18 can check out R rated movies, and children only with parent permission. The Bentonville library bookstore has made no changes. The Arkansas State Library board are only interested in sexually explicit materials or stated behaviors in books. The state will hold all state libraries accountable to ensure that none of those materials are available to children.

On the **Communications** front; Connie is doing a great job with Facebook. Valerie Katz enjoys doing the newsletter and Gay distributed all the new yearbook inserts. Thanks *Yall*!

Signature Project – Allison Carter is the **Curriculum Director at Decatur** and will come and talk to us at our October 15 meeting. Purchasing the teacher instruction books for reading for Kindergarten and First Grade will be her focus.

Ashlin Feeber, the **Decatur High School English teacher,** leads the high school book club. At their first club meeting, they will pick a book and let us know the title. She said they would need 10 books. She suggested buying from Bookoutlet.com or Amazon.com.

Emily Hook is the **Decatur High School librarian.** She is new to the Decatur Library and needs to do an inventory. She doesn't know yet where/how we could help yet. She would love a book giveaway for the high school. We may note Act 372 and steer away from a high school book giveaway.

Terri Gaither has written to the Superintendent of Bentonville schools on how to contact teachers regarding our two **scholarships.**

An **Awards Committee** has been formed! Peggy Rosenthal, Patty Creighton, and Roxane Hipwell will be prepared for March submissions deadlines.

Sammy Laney gave us an update on the **DEB Project** building grant process. The grant has been submitted, and they will know if they won in fall. Sammy asked for prayers.



Members had a great time helping flip the store to fall/winter merchandise. This time we were joined by others from First Baptist Church - Bentonville and Rotary.



Spaghetti Supper is coming! Marlene Olafson and Gay checked out the Methodist Church kitchen, and it is workable. Sue Sterling noted St. Bernards church will post the dinner in their bulletin. Carolyn Cross provided brownie pans and 2 boxes of mix to everyone at the meeting. The Mystery Bag team will meet at Cheryl Johannsen's house on Monday, September 21, at 10:00 am to put the bags together. Last day for Mystery Bag items or money for the team to purchase, must be done at the September 15 meeting. Roxane Hipwell handed out the 15 dinner tickets for each to sell. Items may be brought to Altrusa meetings, or you can arrange a time for Cheryl (or a committee member) to pick up your items. Cheryl 479-619-6291. In the event you do not wish to shop for items, you may give $40 to Cheryl.

Save the dates:
Thursday, September 24 – Spaghetti Dinner, First United Methodist Church BV, 20 Boyce Dr.
September 30--Decatur Elementary Book Giveaway
10:00

Valerie Katz:
Communications vjkatz21@gmail.com
Meetings are held at 11:30 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month
Our web-site altrusa-bb.com See us on Face book www.facebook.com/altrusa8
Login for Altrusa is: user – Altrusan, password – MamieBass1955