

Altruism in Action

December 2011
Newsletter

Altrusa, International of Rochester, Inc.
altrusarochester.org



Altrusa Vista

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It would take a whole library, to chronicle the contribution of women's groups to society. But let me zero in on a particle time in the twentieth century when WWI and patriotism fueled the participation of women in traditionally men's activities.

The Women's Suffrage Movement was still stymied from succeeding to win the vote for women in the US, but they had helped agitate women to participate as full citizens in many other aspects of society. When men went to war, women filled their shoes in factories, hospitals, on farms and more. Women enrolled in the Navy as nurses, clerks, drivers, etc. Women at home planted gardens, formed or joined existing clubs to help out the Red Cross and the War effort in many ways.

As the War ended, woman's position in society remained changed forever and professional women emerged, not wanting to just be adjunct to the men's fraternal organizations of the times, but to form their own groups.

Mamie L Bass, Altrusa's founder, had such a vision, a group not just for professional networking, but one good for service. What she started in Indianapolis in 1917 has spread around the globe.

Now, nearly a century later, we continue the tradition of our foremothers, partnering with other groups as well, to make a difference in our communities. We Altrusans in Rochester are proud to be part of this history.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Dec 2 & 3 - Metro Justice Fair
- ◆ Dec 14 - Monthly Mtg
- ◆ Dec 17 - Bethany House Christmas Party

Contact us:
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Find us on Facebook

Festival-to-Go and BookFest a Great Success!

Fifteen children's authors from RACWI met with over thirty classrooms in two of Rochester's city schools to share their books, the magic of story-telling and the writing process. The authors donate their time for this special event, a value of hundreds of dollars per author.

Altrusa members Barb Crisafulli, Karen Marquardt, Jody LaRose, Barb Mitacek, Bo Clark and Debby Zeman joined the authors and awarded them with a certificate of appreciation. Altrusa also purchased copies of the authors' books and donated them to the schools' libraries.

RACWI, Rochester Area Children's Writers and Illustrators, hosted their annual BookFest at MCC on November 5th. Altrusa supported the BookFest with a donation, was featured in their booklet and sponsored a booth at the festival.

Several thousand children and their parents came through the BookFest to hear authors speak and buy books to be signed by the authors.

Altrusans passed out brochures and explained our support of literacy to passers-by. Gently used books were also collected to be added to city school libraries.



*Delivery of 20
Buckets filled with
cleaning supplies to
Bethany House*

Bethany House Update

Altrusa of Rochester has supported Bethany House for many years. When Bethany House moved to a new location in Our Lady of Perpetual Help convent, Altrusa outfitted one of their ten guest rooms, where women can spend several weeks during periods of transition.

Altrusa made our annual delivery of 20 buckets filled with cleaning supplies in October. It was also recently learned that the Diocese of Rochester wishes to sell the building and Bethany House is looking to raise the \$100,000 necessary to purchase it. Altrusa of Rochester

voted to make a donation and individual Altrusans are stepping forward with personal donations as well.

In December Altrusa will help with the annual Bethany House Christmas Party, sponsoring a family photography experience. Altrusans have also adopted a family and will purchase presents and bring them to the party for our family. Gifts will include a membership in the Strong Museum of Play, school supplies and toys for the youngsters.

Community Place Student

For a second year, Altrusa is sponsoring a young lady who has graduated from a local high school and is moving on to her freshman year of college. The students are participants in Community Place's youth development program and are strong in academics and leadership potential. Community Place grew out of the "settlement" model to serve city neighborhoods in Rochester.

Altrusa helps each student with the purchase of much needed college supplies, such as a laptop, printer, dorm supplies or textbook purchases, which she could not afford to buy on her own. This year's student, Marquis, came with her Community Place sponsor, Linda Weissegger, to our November meeting and shared her background and growth at school so far.

RAIHN News

The Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network is in dire need of support. Area churches have opened their doors as homeless shelters on a rotating basis, but the program needs supplies and other support.

Altrusa has taken over the purchase of laundry detergent for RAIHN, both large bottles for laundry at the sites and

small bottles (purchased individually by members) for guests to take with them to any temporary housing they may find.

RAIHN can also use support through the purchase of their new cookbook. They will be available for sale at One World Goods at Pittsford Plaza. RAIHN has a special "Shop Till You Drop" evening on November 28th to sell the books.

Metro Justice Fair

The place to be the evening of Dec 2, 5 - 9 pm, or 10 am - 2 pm on Saturday, Dec 3, is the Metro Justice Alternative Fair at the First Unitarian Church at 220 South Winton.

Rochester area groups dedicated to supporting causes centered on economic and social justice will have tables with products for sale and plenty of information about their groups.

You can buy fair trade coffee from Coffee Connection, jewelry and clothing from local craftspeople and much more.

Expect to spend time talking with the vendors and learning more about the sources of the products and how they support grass roots initiatives both locally and abroad.

It is Holiday shopping with a conscience!

*"The arrival of
cold weather and
the holidays can
present challenges
for many in our
communities."*

District Two

District Two of Altrusa International encompasses NY, NJ, PA, DC, MD, VA and WV.

Two topics were the focus of the annual district conference this past spring: Altrusa branding and service.

Altrusans are encouraged to share our vision of service and give our clubs credit for the wonderful work we do in our communities.

One particular service opportunity stood out among the many mentioned at the conference. Project "Any Hero" fosters the writing of letters, especially one of thanks, to the men and women serving in the military. Many servicemen and women do not have enough support from people they know "back home."

To get involved, go to operationwritehome.org

Altrusa International

Due to an unusual year of catastrophes Altrusa International has added relief efforts to its spectrum of concerns.

New Zealand hosts a thriving number of Altrusa clubs and they were hit hard by the Christchurch earthquake. Their projects include helping children's literacy through story writing, beautifying their towns, and supporting women who are care-givers for those with Alzheimer's Disease.

Aid has also been extended to Haiti where another earthquake did extensive damage to Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas. Altrusa, International has also responded to Japan's tsunami victims.

The 2013 International Convention will be in New Zealand. What a great opportunity to literally see "another side of the world."

The Altrusa story is evolving every day through club accomplishments. When you visit any Altrusa club, you will see leadership and service in action.

December Club Meeting

Our December meeting is on the 14th at Jody LaRose's home. Potluck sign-ups will be in the invite to be sent out on Dec 1. Members also signed up to purchase gifts for our Bethany House family. If you were not at the meeting and wish to help out, contact Jody for suggestions.

Don't forget your secret gift (under \$10, please) to be shared at the meeting. Make sure the gift supports another

group, such as GoodWill, One World Goods, etc. Also... we will continue to collect both small laundry detergent bottles for RAIHN and the small hotel-sized toiletries for St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center. You can bring them to any meeting.

Start thinking about wine raffle ticket sales for the February fundraiser. Raffle tickets make good stocking stuffers!