

Altruism in Action

January 2012
Newsletter

Altrusa International of Rochester, Inc.
altrusarochester.org



Altrusa Vista

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Jan 11 - Monthly Mtg 6 pm Flour City Diner
- ◆ Jan 14 - Metro Justice Second Saturdays at 10 am at Equal Grounds

Contact us:

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Find us on Facebook

Women's clubs are the original "social network." No matter whether a book club, a sewing circle, a parent-school, alumnae or service organization, women have connected with each other for mutual growth and the benefit of society for centuries.

Imagine how technology has changed how women have been able to connect. Shortly after the end of the Civil War, the posted letter was the most convenient method of communicating. Then came the telephone in the 1870's, though it took several decades for telephone lines to make it across most of the nation.

The computer has brought a whole new way for women to connect. Email allows us to reach all of our members in one key stroke...instantaneously. Newsletters, documents, invitations, and announcements can all reach a wider audience than ever before.

The cell phone has empowered us to be in touch with each other no matter where we are. Texting and instant messaging make communication swifter and more convenient than ever.

The new social networks, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs and others, are carrying women's groups into a vast new territory. Not only can we connect within our smaller groups, we can now tap into the greater body of news, ideas, connections, inspiration, collaboration and assistance with other groups as well. Altrusans are in a great position to take advantage of this new networking.

The ROC the Day event below is a prime example of not-for-profit collaboration, much of it spread through social networking. 2012 is clearly going to be a year for these networks to blossom.

ROC the Day a Great Success!

The United Way of Greater Rochester organized a unique event this past December 8th. For one twenty-four hour period donors could log onto a special website and donate to one or more of the local nonprofits who had registered for ROC the Day.

Special prizes of \$5,000 grants were awarded by the Rochester Community Foundation to the four most visited nonprofits, GEVA Theater Center,

Lollipop Farm, School of the Holy Childhood and the Genesee Valley Audubon Society.

All in all, nearly \$567,000 was pledged by over 6,600 donors to aid 671 local organizations, from well-established not-for-profits helping in all areas of human services to new start-ups in more rural areas where population support is smaller.



*Barb M., Jill, Barb C.
and Karen wrapping
gifts for our Bethany
House Family*

“From the very beginning, we had a dream of being closely engaged with women as they grow, not just from within but also as they rebuild their lives in the world around them.”

*-Margy Mayk
Co-Founder,
Step By Step*

Bethany House Christmas Party

Rochester Altrusans purchased and wrapped gifts for a specific Bethany House family at our December meeting. Gifts included school supplies in an adult tote for the mother who is going back to school, toys and clothes for the kids and a year’s membership to the Strong Museum of Play. Barb Mitacek delivered the packages to St. Mary’s Church Downtown where the annual Christmas Party was held Dec 17th.

The group Women in Construction provided the meal and a youth choir

from St. Louis Church entertained with singing. Liz Finnegan and Jody LaRose were Santa’s elves, helping distribute gifts to all the families attending the party. Jody and Margie Kitz also took studio style family photos for the guests at the party. Liz and Barb zipped out to get the pictures printed to hand to the families while they were still at the party. The families especially appreciated the more formal photos. A CD of candid photos was given to Bethany House Director Donna Eckerd to share with families.

Community Place Student

Altrusa purchased a printer to supplement the computer we gave to our Community Place student. Debby connected with Linda Weissegger and the printer was given to Marquis at the

Community Place Christmas party just a few days before Christmas. Marquis continues to work on her academic program with the intention of majoring in physical education.

Step By Step Now Part of the VOA

The Rev. Ruthellen Hoyle, Step By Step’s recently retired Executive Director, writes with great thanks that the “story” of Step By Step is now part of the Volunteers of America, Western NY, Inc. Step By Step programs will continue uninterrupted and will be complemented by the VOA’s dedication

to breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering women who are at risk of incarceration to build healthy lives for themselves and their families. Please continue Rochester Altrusa’s long term support of Step By Step at its new address: 214 Lake Avenue, Bldg C, Rochester, NY 14608.

Mary’s Place Outreach

Several Rochester Altrusans are visiting the refugees at Mary’s Place on Lexington Ave. Directed by Kathy LaBue, Mary’s Place offers on-premise counseling and tutoring to refugees of all ages. Many are learning English for the first time and need more help than

the ESL classes offered in the public schools. Donations of clothing, housewares and baby items are especially needed. Altrusa’s bi-annual garage sale will be helping bring household items to the center too. Find our more at marysplaceoutreach.org

Metro Justice Rochester

Metro Justice Rochester is a group founded in 1965 dedicated to social and economic justice. Members join their voices together to be more effective in addressing issues such as the vast difference in school funding in NY State, based on the wealth of the local school district, which impacts student literacy.

Altrusa supports literacy too. While easy to rescue or buy books for grammar school-aged children, it is equally

important to help high schoolers become college-ready. This is more difficult to do in the most rural school districts which rely heavily on property taxes for their income.

Become an informed citizen, whether you are a political activist or not. Metro Justice welcomes members and non-members to their Second Saturdays coffee hour at Equal Grounds Coffee, 750 South Ave., to help stay informed.

District Two

We are mid-way into District Two's Governor Sandi Craig's biennium and her theme of "Grow in Altrusa."

Her goals address the three critical areas of Service, Leadership and Camaraderie.

January is a great time to consider some new resolutions, such as Sandi's goals. Service, Altrusa's most critical *raison d'être*, can be in the number of projects a club participates in, how

many hands-on hours members commit to a project, whether a club participates in Make A Difference Day as well as its participation in District and/or International service opportunities.

Rochester Altrusans are encouraged to keep a log of their hours of service to both the club projects and other community activities for our annual report to the District.

Altrusa International

Altrusa International's Foundation celebrates its 50th Jubilee this year. Foundation has reached out this past year to multiple catastrophes along with its usually quiet work through Altrusa clubs around the globe.

International also celebrated the longest serving Altrusan, Elenore Irish, in the most recent *International Altrusan*.

Elenore has been a member since 1952 and has served her club in Portland, ME in many ways. At 94, Elenore has become an Emeritus Member.

Rochester has its own Emeritus Member, Bo Clark. Our Bo joined Altrusa in 1982. She came to Altrusa through her commitment to Girl Scouts, a love she continues to serve. Jane Miller, a fellow Girl Scouter, invited Bo to her first Altrusa meeting.

Bo is the original net-worker. She can tap into all facets of Rochester city living and its many organizations. She remembers people and events with an iron trap mind. Bo's favorite kinds of service have been projects which help women who "fall through the cracks."

In earlier years Bo attended many District Two conferences and even some International Conventions. Her favorite memory was being present when Phyllis Corman was nominated to be International President-Elect. She also remembers being on a plane to Ireland and spotting the Altrusa pin on a fellow passenger and a "Welcome Altrusa" banner at the Dublin airport.

Bo's motto is, "I never met an Altrusan I didn't like." We applaud Bo as Rochester's quintessential Altrusan!

"I never met an Altrusan I didn't like."

- Bo Clark

January Club Meeting

Our January meeting will be at 6:00 pm at the Flour City Diner (2500 East Ave in the Renaissance Building) on January 11, 2012. The guest speaker will be a representative of Jennifer's House, a residential drug treatment program for women and children and an outreach of Spiritus Christi Church.

Look for the e-vite for dinner and attendance information.

Members...don't forget to sell wine raffle tickets for the February fundraiser. Money raised will support our student in Kenya and other literacy and women's needs projects.