NEWSLETTER
ALTRUSA CLUB OF NANAIMO

SEPTEMBER 2020
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“SUPPORTING WOMEN, CHILDREN AND LITERACY”

PLANNING

SEPTEMBER
• Newsletter
• VP – review bylaws
• Board – review long range strategic plan & policies
• Members – review LRSP at business meeting
• Board – Foundation Grant Application by September 15th
• Retreat – Campbell River?
• Swags – assemble swag for photo for poster
• International Project – members’ ideas

OCTOBER
• Make a Difference Day - muffins
• School emergency letters mailed
• Rotary Book Sale – coordinator?
• International Project Ideas – Business Meeting

NOVEMBER
• Treasurer – Submit Gaming Grant application
• Swags – made and delivered
• Make a difference day - report
• Retreat Ideas – volunteer to organize for 2021

DECEMBER
• Haven Craft Shelves filled - volunteers
• Christmas party – Director?
• Library Delivery sheets with dates - Coordinator
• Thank-you gift to business meeting location? – VP

ONGOING
• Library Book delivery, Haven weeding & garden care, care bags, new member initiatives, speakers, newsletter submissions, fundraisers, Altrusa planter.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

What a challenging year!

It’s been a huge shock to our budget to lose fundraising dollars from our Annual Garden Tour and Rotary Club Book Sale. Thankfully, our Treasurer has been able to navigate the ups and downs of our finances and help us make sense of it all.

As I scroll through the newsletter, I realize just how many projects we kept going, despite restrictions and summer supposedly being our ‘down time’. Our ‘Weed Wenches’ did an astounding amount of work over the summer at Haven House and Beach Estates, and we have the photos to prove it. Care bags still reached the women who needed assistance and we were able to award 3 bursaries to deserving students. StoryWalk was rescheduled to July and the kids enjoyed a sunny if somewhat windy day, reading “Duck on a Bike”. An impromptu muffin bake, organized by Holly, was a huge success! And things look very positive for a go-ahead with our Christmas Swags project.

Going forward, there is some uncertainty. We are still looking at ways to restart the library book delivery service. And there are continuing challenges on ways to come together for projects, meetings and social time. One certainty is that we are determined to find ways to keep helping our community throughout this pandemic.

Our District Twelve Altrusa Board sent out a survey and one of the questions asked was what did we like best about our particular club. That was easy. We are all each other’s biggest fans. It can’t get better than that!

Trudi

MONTHLY MEETINGS

BOARD MEETINGS
• 1st Tuesday
• 2:00 p.m.
• Members’ homes

BUSINESS/DINNER MEETINGS
• Thursday, September 24th
  12:30 p.m.
  Nanaimo Golf Club
  2800 Highland Blvd.

• Future meetings to be scheduled as conditions permit

We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

After a vote, it was unanimous that we all wanted to meet in person. And what a lovely way to hand over the reins from the out-going Board of Directors to the in-coming Board of Directors, in a sunny garden, sitting the mandatory 6 feet apart, and snacking on Janice S’s freshly baked cookies and cake!

Past-president Marean, new Director Sue R, Vice-President Janice S, & new Director Holly

Past Vice-President Vicki, Treasurer Jan W, Secretary Cheryl C & Vice-President Linda
Past President Marean was presented with a silver bell. When the gavel doesn’t work, this quickly brings things to order!

In-coming President Trudi...I’m gonna have to get me one of them thar bells to keep the rowdies in line!

FROM HAVEN SOCIETY’S FACEBOOK PAGE

“At Haven Society we are incredibly fortunate to have long term donors like Altrusa of Nanaimo. Last week they dropped off towels and sleep wear for women, children and youth❤️”

Altrusa has adapted its procedures to ensure we can keep delivering essentials to Haven House. Here Cheryl C (right), along with a Haven House volunteer, unpacks some much needed pyjamas and nighties. We are so grateful to be able to continue this service during the pandemic.
Here is the before and after of what a couple of green thumbs and hard work can accomplish! Now that the daffodils are finished blooming, Pat N and Vicki have replaced them with 88 begonias they received from the City of Nanaimo. The Church of the Nazarene provides the water and Pat and Vicki alternate watering on a weekly basis throughout the summer. How wonderful to have the City, Altrusa, and the Church all working together to beautify the community. Thank you, Pat and Vicki, for all the ‘TLC’ you shower on this planter!

HAVEN HOUSE GARDEN

The ‘Weed Wenches’ have had 2 successful work bees in the Haven Grounds so far. Their first goal was removing giant weeds and trimming bushes at the Administration building and around the parking lot. This was accomplished in 4 hours and they were able to move along and into the gardens around the Transition House.

Milner Group is supplying a bin for the garden debris, so we no longer need to haul bags to their remote recycle site. Yah!!!

Here’s Sharen (left), Janice G (in the background) and Sue R hiding under the big hat.
Jan kitted out & ready for whatever the garden presents.  Sue & Linda on clean up duty after 3 hours of working in the garden.  Janice G removing bags of garden debris to the bin Milner Group Enterprises is providing.

Janice G plants donated bulbs to the shade garden.  Rest time after an hour of weeding in around the parking lot.  Janice brought the children's picnic table her husband made for their children & grandchildren.  Cheryl is getting ready to blow away fir seeds from the parking lot.  Linda prepares to stage the garden benches and Sue is contemplating trimming of a very prickly shrub.  Jan with one of the gigantic weeds outside the fence.
NANAIMO STREET BANNERS

The curator at the Nanaimo Art Gallery at VIU found these banners at the gallery which had been painted by children and, until they were retired, hung throughout the City of Nanaimo. They are about 6 years old and were hung in the Haven House Gardens along their fences, in the children’s play zone, and in seating areas along the fence. Some of our larger banners were donated by Sharen's brother Gordon and sister-in-law Marcia, both of whom have contributed to various projects within the garden over the years, along with a large birdhouse and many garden ornaments. The banners have been hanging for about a year in various spots on the inside of the fence and had become quite dirty. Since Haven was having the fence re-stained, we took them down to clean them. They'll be rehung after the fence is done. Thank you, Sharen and Sue R.

PROJECT RE-ENTRY

Sherry (left), one of our Project Re-entry applicants, is presented with a $1,000 cheque by Trudi. Sherry is enrolled in the education program at VIU and this will help out with living expenses on her way towards a teaching degree. We wish her every success!

BRAG BRAG BRAG

We’ve always known that our club had an incredible group of women. We are Altrusans, after all! Last year, our group of 29 members devoted a total of **4,351** hours to community service. In addition to the time dedicated to Altrusa projects, many members also volunteered at other organizations such as the Loaves & Fishes Food Bank, the Red Cross, Blood Services Canada, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, NRGH Auxiliary, Parksville Curling Club, and Rotary Club, to name just a few. And we continue to serve throughout this difficult time. That calls for a big pat on the back. But not too hard. Some of us might topple over!
It was a sunny though windy day when we co-hosted StoryWalk with Nanaimo Parks & Rec at the Altrusa Playground on July 10th. Kids got to read “Duck on a Bike” from pages that were placed on the fence around the perimeter of the park. Once finished, they were treated to juice and Goldfish crackers (generously donated by QUALITY FOODS), and then got to pick a book from the book table to take home with them. Our books came from the French Immersion School in Parksville, and Marean labelled them with our Altrusa name. As one little fellow exclaimed, “Wow, we didn’t expect all this when we came here!” A happy parent commented that this was the first book their child had ever read from cover to cover. Around 66 children stopped by to take part. The kids and parents really seemed to enjoy it, and it was great fun watching how excited the kids got when they were told they could take the book they picked home with them! Thank you, Janice S and Judy, for facilitating this event and getting us out into the community! We succeeded in encouraging literacy in a fun way and also in raising awareness of Altrusa Nanaimo. Thanks to Marean for collecting and storing the great children's books for giveaways. Quality Foods provided more snacks than requested, so we had some Goldfish crackers and juice left over. Holly will take these, along with the muffins, to John Barsby School to help feed hungry Nanaimo families.
The City of Nanaimo laminated each page of the book for us so they can be reused in other parks around town. The Altrusa playground was a perfect venue.

Kids ran from page to page, often with parents reading the story. “COSMOS” by CARL SAGAN

“What an astonishing thing a book is. It’s a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles.

But one glance at it and you’re inside the mind of another person, maybe somebody dead for thousands of years. Across the millennia, an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head – directly to you.

Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other, citizens of distant epochs. Books break the shackles of time. A book is proof that humans are capable of working magic.”
‘LANDSCAPE LADIES’

Altrusa ‘Weed Wenches’ (Janice, Jan, Sue, Cheryl, Roberta, Linda & Sharen) became ‘Landscape Ladies’, clearing paths and laying bark mulch in garden beds & gravel along walkways within the ‘Serenity Garden’. They washed tables and benches, freshened up garden decorations, spruced up the wishing well with a new coat of paint, and bagged cones and droppings from the tree canopy. These seven ambitious women made the gardens come to life.
As Sue said, "Mission Accomplished"! This morning she and I were at the parking lot in front of Best Buy receiving muffins. Thanks to everyone for bringing your baked goods there. Special thanks to Roberta and her husband for stopping at Marean’s to pick up muffins as well as bringing her own. 12 dozen!! She baked 12 dozen!! I feel like a slacker having only baked 3 dozen. Thank you, Roberta.

Sue and I met at the school where we delivered approximately ~73 dozen muffins. The ladies at the school were thrilled! We got a small tour of the operation and learned where their needs are. I've got the email of the coordinator and told her we would be in touch. Once school resumes, they might have a need for our assistance. We may need to revisit the frequency of baking, if all are in favour.

Thanks again to everyone. – HOLLY
During the school year, Quality Foods donates approximately 200 plain brown bags for food distribution. These bags are filled with 2 loaves of Cobb’s bread, a bag of cereal, granola bars, eggs, milk, tins of fish/meat/beans, a jar of fake peanut butter, bags of produce (some grown right in John Barsby School’s gardens), one dinner entrée with salad and dressing provided by Cocoa’s Café, and donated food (our muffins), amongst other items. Private corporations and citizens donate both food and money. Additionally, funds are also provided by 4 separate grants to buy items like proteins, eggs and milk.

One bag feeds a child breakfast and lunch for 6 days. Families register and can pick up one bag of food per child, up to 4 bags. Unregistered families do not get turned away.

Volunteers and summer students help to sort and bag the groceries. These are then driven to 3 depots where drivers wait for 45 minutes for pick-ups before going to the next depot. The drivers help to spread the word by encouraging those using the programme to tell others about it.

Plans for how to handle distribution once school resumes, in whatever form, are still being determined.

Thank you, Sue R!

MEMBER RECOGNITION

Altrusan Sue R delivered flowers and cards to Vicki and Val to recognize them for their years of service to our club. Turley’s Florist, who also supports Altrusa by selling garden tour tickets for us, made up beautiful bouquets that included glads, dahlia, carnations, daisies and greenery. Both Val and Vicki loved them! Thank you, ladies, for all your hard work and positive energy and dedication!

Vicki (15 years of service) and Sue

Val (5 years of service) and Sue
ALTRUSANS REALLY ROCK

Our Nanoose Bay Altrusans, Nicole, Donna and Sue R, got together to paint some rocks which were then placed throughout the gardens and trails at Haven House, for the kids to find, move around and play with. These delightful rock creations joined existing rocks, gnome doors, and little bird houses, which have been donated over time by Altrusa members and their families and friends. What talented ladies! Thank you, Sue, for taking the pics! You should have done a selfie!

The kids will LOVE these!

‘Artistes’ at work

Nicole with a steady hand

What’s on your mind, Donna?
WOMEN’S CARE BAGS

We had a request from Sarah at Haven House to include face masks, hand sanitizers and tissue in our women’s Care Bags. The purpose of our Care Bags is to provide vulnerable people with items to meet their basic needs. Personal protective equipment is essential during the Coronavirus pandemic. Cheryl will approach Samaritan House and the Women’s Resource Centre to see if they also require masks and sanitizer. This is a great way for Altrusa to respond to the need for PPE in our community. Thank you, Cheryl, for organizing this.

ASPIRATIONS OF AN ALTRUSAN

Let me be always open minded, that I may recognize good for Altrusa wherever it may be.

Let me be ready always to put aside my personal opinions for the greater good, for the greater number.

Let me see principles and not personalities, and, discerning them, let me serve them whole heartedly through every cloud of doubt and discouragement.

Let me have faith still that the voice of the majority is the voice of good and let me lend myself to the working out sincerely of what the majority chooses. Knowing that the organization is but the individual multiplied by many and that the organization reflects not only the constructive good, but also the mistaken ideas, the short-sightedness, the failures of the individual, let me still adhere to the will of the majority, knowing that time will reveal the better way and lead our footsteps aright if we tread with purer motives and unselfish hearts.

Mamie L. Bass, 22nd May, 1924.