

March 2024

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“SUPPORTING WOMEN, CHILDREN AND LITERACY”

We have *another* new member!



Janice S, Cheryl and Carol

Carol was born in Vancouver and has lived in Germany as well as three other provinces. She has two children and two grandchildren.

Armed with an accounting background, Carol worked for Island Health for over 20 years. She heard about Altrusa through Cheryl at a fitness class. “Altrusa provides support in areas I am very interested in helping with”.

Welcome Carol, we’re so happy to have you!



Baby Bundles

We saw this project when it was presented at the 2023 conference. Verena connected with Campbell River to find out more about the project: target group, point of contact, partner organizations and contents of baby diaper bag etc. We got excited and tried to decide what we could do that was similar to their bag. Campbell River brought their bag to their retreat for me to see and I was able to ask a lot more questions.



Janice S, Janice G, Bobbie, Verena and Holly packed each of the 20 reusable bags with baby wipes, swaddling blankets, wash cloths, burp blankets, sleepers and onesies, soft baby toy, rattle, a quilt or crochet blanket, a small baby book, and a pack of 32 diapers.

We did a needs assessment by finding out what was in the community already, and what was needed. We dug deeper eventually connecting with NRGH. (Yay Janice). We identified three areas of need that we connected with. Create a diaper bag with basics for mum and babe at about \$149-160 a bag, contribute to the existing provincial initiative 'Bed in a Box' or create comfort bags for kids who accompany parents and other siblings (all of whom might need care, or not) on visits to the ER. (Much like when the fire department responds to an emergency, they give the child a stuffed toy). We loved all of these ideas and knew we needed money. We applied to Rotary for 3 grants and were given \$2000. There was no directive as to which project we could use the funds for so we went with the baby pack project. It was the closest match to our budget. We plan to apply for an Altrusa grant in March.



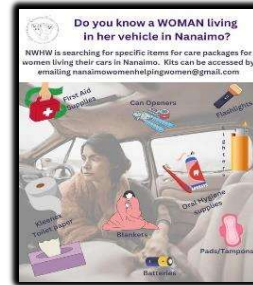
With a little money left over, we also gathered and delivered for another favourite project. The children in emergency department and pediatrics. We bought some small toys, sticker books, and colouring books with crayons. These will be made available for small patients and their siblings while in hospital

to keep their little hands busy to distract and hopefully create a smile. So many members helped out with this project. There were buyers, assemblers and delivery people. Thanks to all who participated in this fun project. A special thanks goes out to The Rotary Club of Nanaimo for the \$2000 Grant.

Nanaimo Women Helping Women



Our speakers for January were from Nanaimo Women Helping Women. (NWHW). Kerri Isham (L) founded NWHW October 2021. She is a Certified Sexual Health Educator & runs her own business - Power Up Education. She was the recipient of the Health & Wellness category through Nanaimo Business Awards & is currently being nominated for the Woman of Influence Nanaimo in the Community & Social Responsibility category. Sharon Delgarno (R) is on the Admin Team & is in charge of collecting the Country Grocer receipts.



Cheryl is giving a Victory sign as she completed the 50th (& last box) with NWHW. These boxes are to be given to women living in their cars. Each box includes a pair of socks, tea candles, lighter, flashlight, batteries, bag of snacks, a bag of personal items, Ziploc bags, garbage bags, duck tape, a gift card, can opener, some food items, etc. Cheryl also purchased canvass pouches for menstrual products given to NWHW along with rain ponchos & a wool blanket.

*Yesterday is history
Tomorrow is a mystery
Today is a gift*

The History of Altrusa

Altrusa International was founded in Nashville, Tennessee in 1917, originally as Altrusa Institute. During that time, a record number of women were going to work during World War I, and there was a need for women's civic organizations. Dr. Alfred Durham, a member of Kiwanis, began organizing clubs throughout Nashville, TN, Louisville, KY, and Dayton, OH, before he moved on to Indianapolis, IN, where he met Mamie L. Bass. Mamie L. Bass had served as the Superintendent of the Women's Division of the United States Employment Services, and was a partner in her brother's architecture firm. She also assisted him in organizing a Rotary chapter in Indianapolis. While she admired Dr. Durham's Institute, Bass felt that Altrusa could serve a higher purpose.



Mamie L Bass

In June 1918, when Altrusa held its first convention in Indianapolis, Mamie L. Bass's vision became reality. The Altrusa Institute became a classified service organization for women. Later, the Altrusa Institute was renamed as the National Association of Altrusa Clubs and adopted By-Laws that laid the groundwork for today's Altrusans. Soon after, Mamie L. Bass created the Principles of Altrusa which defined Altrusa as "a builder of women" and an organization based on merit and accomplishment. The Principles were officially adopted in 1921 along with a major club building effort.

By 1922, Altrusa had 20 clubs. In 1935, Altrusa became international when the first club in Mexico was organized. Since that first step over US borders in 1935, Altrusa moved into Puerto Rico, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, India, Korea, Russia, Ukraine, Ireland, Great Britain, Bermuda, Canada, and New Zealand.

In 1946, Altrusa sent its first representative to the United Nations. In 1962, Altrusa International established the Altrusa International Foundation. In 1966, the organization established ASTRA.

In 1962, Altrusa International established the Altrusa International Foundation, which is dedicated to improving economic well-being and quality of life through a commitment to community services and literacy.

In 1966, the organization began to look to America's youth as the future of Altrusa and established ASTRA service clubs. ASTRA encourages young people, ages 13 to 21, to participate in community service. Expanding on its commitment to youth, Altrusa adopted literacy as on-going area of service in 1977.

The eighties and nineties brought many exciting changes to Altrusa. With the end of Communism, the former Soviet Union saw its first Altrusa clubs. Increasing its global outlook, Altrusa expanded projects beyond literacy and education by adopting a resolution to promote environmental concerns in 1989. The new millennium continues to bring new ideas and opportunities for Altrusa. In 2011, the association launched a new branding and marketing campaign with the purpose of increasing Altrusa's image in the communities, and reaching out to an evolving membership. Mamie passed in 1962 at 83 years old and has left quite a legacy.

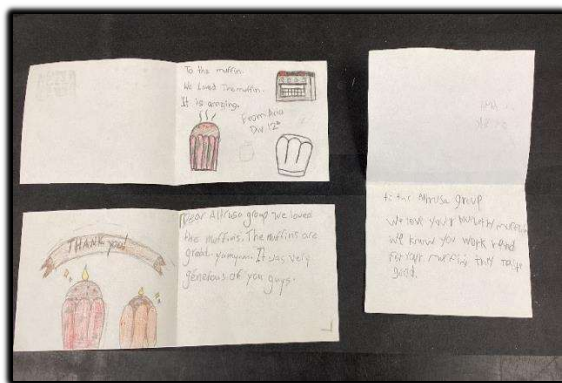
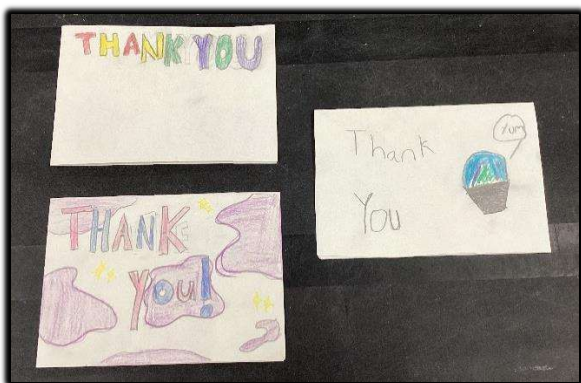
The cornerstone of an Altrusan:

Patriotism Efficiency Service



Make a Difference Day

In early March we delivered 100 dozen muffins to Fairview School. We had a great turnout and the school was beyond happy of their bounty. What warmed our hearts the most was the cards and poster from the children. Thanks to everyone who baked and who had friends bake muffins. Thanks again to Verena for doing such a great job of organizing.



Aldea Maya

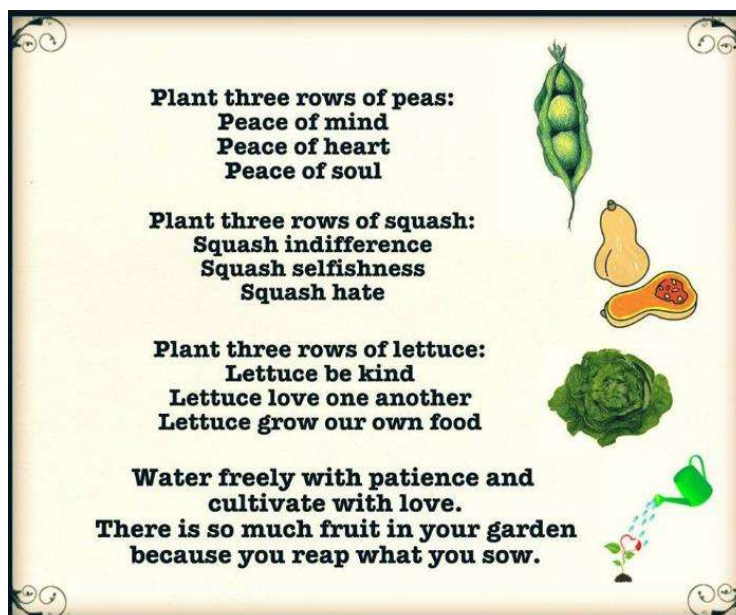
February's guest speaker was Louise Sosa, founder of "Aldea Maya", a non-profit organization that helps Indigenous Mayans in Central America. We learned about their dire living conditions and how Aldea Maya helps improve food sustainability, nutrition and education. Our members then had fun shopping from the display of handmade items that the locals from Guatemala create and sell.



Cedar Woman House

This past week Penny & Cheryl dropped off items to CWH. These are items that were requested by the staff there. Adult colouring books, children's books, notebooks, cosmetic bags & floss.

Cedar Woman House is a 24/7 staffed transition house for women and their dependent children who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing violence.



Coldest Night of the Year

What a great time the Altrusa Angels had on the “Coldest Night of the Year” walkathon! The weather was perfect and the company was fun. There was a strong sense of community as more than 400 walkers raised money for the Island Crisis Care Society. Walking 5 kilometres around Nanaimo was enlightening, and a good chance to share information about our club too. Thanks to our supporters, the Altrusa Angels raised nearly \$7000. This will provide emergency shelter, stabilization & recovery beds, and life skills training for people in crisis. The Angels walking team had 3 Altrusans and 8 friends: Erin, Lorrie, Keri, Anne, Jan, Kaitlyn, Kerri, Carol, K'reen, Rosanna and Donna. We're already looking forward to next year! (Written by Jan Weir).



We will be known forever by the tracks we leave.



Another couple of Fun Lunch Socials



Several of us gathered at the Lantzville Pub in January for our monthly lunch and a laugh. We also met in February at Montana's (R) for a delicious meal. Good food and good company.

In Memoriam

Helen Margaret Strickland (Hamilton)

January 18, 1933 - February 20, 2024

Helen was born on the family farm near Carlyle, Saskatchewan. Her childhood was idyllic, with stories of a pet pig, riding horses to school, and earning her pilot license. Helen attended secretarial school in 1951 and became the first female official court reporter in Regina City Court, she was secretary to the leader of the opposition, Grant Notley, for five years. In Winnipeg, she worked for magistrate Judge Trudel.

In 2006, Helen arrived in Nanaimo, her possessions and two dogs crammed into her giant station wagon. She quickly became the “pop lady”, who gave out orange pop on Halloween. She was a dog person who left a water bowl at the bottom of her driveway, giving her a good opportunity to meet everyone passing by. In summer, her front door was always open, literally. Helen also had her own gun collection and a Ford Mustang, which she refurbished and drove for close to 50 years. This led her to the Mustang Club of Nanaimo.

Helen joined Altrusa in 2008. She loved hosting monthly meetings. Every Christmas, she did long shifts on the Salvation Army kettles. In her spare time, she quietly performed acts of generosity for the homeless and people living in poverty all around Nanaimo. Helen helped young people to stay in school, she delivered library books to shut-ins, and helped organize the neighbourhood Block Watch. Helen’s last two years were spent in comfort at Long Lake Chateau, where she found many new friends, new stories, and fertile opportunities to share her own stories. She enjoyed gifting ‘Altrusa’ bags to her friends at the Chateau, always making sure that each bag suited the person it was going to. Compassion, giving, and community were the underpinnings of her life. Helen would want us to be kind to each other, give what we can, live in peace, and always vote! Helen was initiated in 2008, on the same night as Janice S and Jan W, so she always had a special place in their hearts.



2009. Helen helped celebrate the opening of the new Dog Tales Children’s Room in the basement of Literacy Central’s book store. Back row: Lucia, Margaret, Rebecca (Literacy Central), Helen. Middle: Pat F, Arlene, Janice S, Vicki. Front: Yvonne, Marion W.



2010. Helen’s lovely back yard was the site of our summer pot luck get-together. Marion W, Helen, Mary D, Mary E, Marean.



2011. Helen (right) wore her Altrusa sweatshirt, as she and Mary C manned our table at Nanaimo’s Christmas Craft Fair.



2012. Helen made volunteering fun. Here she is, handling the mustard, while making bunwiches for the Great World Championship Bathtub Race. Lila, Helen, Marion



2012. Helen was part of a tree-planting ceremony to celebrate International Women's Day at Haven House. Representatives from Haven Society and City Council were there too. Dawn, Helen, Audrey, Diane, Anne, June, Vivien, Arlene, Jan W, Marion B.



2013. Helen loved hosting the "Communications, Marketing & Membership Committee" (CMM) meetings every month. We surprised her with a birthday cake! She always had a dog living with her. The bigger, the better. Donna, Helen, Linda, Sharen, Cheryl



2013. Thank heavens for Helen. She was STILL delivering books — this time, to Cathy's house. Helen brought lots of joy when she appeared at the door.



2014. Helen volunteered regularly at the Rotary Club's Used Book Sale, on behalf of Altrusa. She loved keeping the books tidy in the "Biographies" section.



2015. Helen was a dedicated Altrusan and volunteered when she could. She and Mary C welcomed guests and handled door prize tickets at our annual Garden Tour fundraiser.



In Memoriam

Joyce Watson (Rudkin)

August 24, 1930 – March 14, 2024

Joyce was born in England, one of 5 children. In 1956 she boarded the ship to Canada and four days into her journey she met the love of her life, First Officer David A. Watson. They married in Montreal in 1958 and returned to England. In 1963 Joyce crossed the Atlantic to settle in Maine, with her 3 daughters in tow to be closer to where David's ship would make port, and their son was born. In 1972, the family moved to Toronto.

Over the next 2 decades Joyce followed David as his job took them back and forth across North America. During this time Joyce was an active volunteer for organizations such as: the YWCA; the National Ballet of Canada and became President of every Newcomers group she joined. In 1994, Joyce and David retired to Nanaimo, BC to be closer to much of their family, who meant everything to her. Joyce continued her volunteer service and was a Director for the Vancouver Island Symphony. Altrusa was so lucky to have enjoyed her talents and passion for 18 years.

Joyce was vibrant, intelligent, elegant, had a wicked sense of humour and was extremely independent. Amazingly, she lived on her own and was still driving right up until the end.

A celebration of life will take place at 2766 Munroe Road, Nanaimo once the weather is warm (at Joyce's request) – date to be determined.

Donations in Joyce's memory can be made to the Canadian Cancer Society.



She was a model at our fashion show and fundraiser



Attaching bows to our Christmas swags



Her 15th Anniversary celebration with Altrusa.



Handing off a bursary to a recipient.



Kicking off the Great Nanaimo Toy Drive at Woodgrove Mall.



Altrusa donated \$3000 to the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Schools Foundation for post secondary bursaries. This photo from the Foundation Appreciation tea.



CALENDAR

APRIL

- Altrusa 71st Anniversary – Lunch Meeting
- Member recognition – Lunch Meeting
Both on April 23rd at Beban Park

MAY

- Present and adopt new Budget
- Install New Board of Directors
- Review Task List and Calendar
 - Submit dues & update roster
- District Conference In Olympia WA

JUNE

- Annual General Meeting
- Volunteers review and close books
 - Spring Garden Tour Jun 23rd
 - Submit Annual report
 - Update website

ON-GOING

- Library Book delivery, Haven weeding & garden care, care bags, new member initiations, speakers, newsletter submissions, fundraisers, Altrusa planter, social media coverage.



April

Donna Apr 19
Lorena Apr 25

June

Pat N Jun 1
Carol Jun 16

MONTHLY MEETINGS

BOARD MEETINGS

1st Tuesday 1:00 pm
Held at a member's home.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

2nd Tuesday 6:30 pm
Nanaimo Seniors Village
6089 Uplands Drive

LUNCH SOCIALS

4th Tuesday
Noon Various restaurants
Announced every month



Board of Directors

2023 – 2024

President:	Elizabeth
Past Presidents:	Vicki Linda
Co-Vice Presidents:	Roberta Janice S
Treasurer:	Trudi
Secretary:	Jan W
Directors:	Marean Cheryl Janice G

Incoming Board - Elect

President :	Vicki
Vice President:	Janice S
Treasurer:	Trudi
Secretary:	Jan W
Directors:	Bobbie Cheryl Roberta

We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia

Grateful to live, work and enjoy the unceded territories of the Snuneymuxw,
Snaw-naw-as, and Stzuminus peoples.

Until next time, be well, stay well.