

KEY CONTACTS:

Club Officers 2025-2026
President – Laurie Herman
1st Vice Pres – Jackie Wilson
2nd Vice Pres – Diane Shaw
Secretary – Amanda Allen
Treasurer – Kelli Langley
2nd Year Director – Kathy Jervis
1st Year Director – Chris Hanses
Immed. Past President -
Melanie Pederson
BRR Chair - Diane Bielanski
Parliamentarian – Jackie Wilson

Contact:

Club email

altrusahsv@gmail.com

Altrusa HSV Website

<https://districteight.altrusa.org/hot-springs-village/>

2025-2027 District Eight

Governor – Sarah Akin

Club Liaison –

Jennifer McKeown

District Eight Website

<https://districteight.altrusa.org>

Altrusa International, Inc.

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Featured Picture

New Member: Meet the newest Altrusan, Tara Santillanez, a Realtor with McGraw Realtors HSV. Her sponsors are Melanie Pederson (left) and Brenda Walls (not pictured). At right are Membership Chair Mary Kramer and President Laurie Herman.



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Serving with 

President’s Message – Laurie Herman

Welcome February! Aesop said, “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted!”

Altrusans practice kindness in our everyday lives. It’s who we are. It’s why we are.

Serving with 

Altrusans are also resilient. The last few days in January surprised us all with the severity of an ice and snowstorm that’s still impacting the Village and all our plans. Many of us are housebound, with road conditions too hazardous to drive, or to even step outside to check our mailboxes. But we’ve found a way to carry on with our Altrusa work, by meeting via Zoom. We’re rescheduling the Fifth Friday Membership Recruitment Social, and it’s become the **First Saturday Social**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Feb. 7. We’ll get to know all of the friends that members bring, and we’ll get those Valentines made for the assisted living residents of Mt. Carmel.

Don’t forget to bring your friends to our February and March meetings – April is Add an Altrusan Month. This will help us find new members!

We also need to remember that February is THE month to get those tickets sold and your money to Diane Shaw by Feb. 27 for **Spring Fling Italiano**.

We need your support as well as the

community’s support. If you can’t attend, please find a friend who can. We also sent sponsor forms. It’s a great time to add financial supporters! We printed the menu in the January Dogwood Blossom, the regular meal, and a gluten free/vegetarian option (veggie lasagna made with gluten-free pasta). A few of our committee members sampled a full dinner and we all agreed it was delicious. We also know how great Ken Goodman was at John and Velma Coolidge’s anniversary celebration in July. For Spring Fling Italiano, he’s bringing a combo with him!

Birthday Books at Mountain Pine are ready to be distributed this month. Please call or email Joan Plautz to be part of that activity. Seeing the look on those kids’ faces when they can pick out a book to keep as their very own is priceless!

I will be traveling out of the country from Feb. 7-21. I am leaving you all in good hands! If you have any questions or concerns, please call any of our Board members for help.

Thank you for all that you do! Have a great month!



Laurie

February Days to Observe: Girls and Women in Science Feb. 11 and Social Justice Feb. 20

By Kathy Jervis

Join UNESCO on Feb. 11, 2026, to celebrate the International Day of Girls and Women in Science and in shaping a future where science and gender equality advance together.

The 2026 theme is "Vision to Impact: Re-defining STEM by closing the gender gap."

Today, women continue to represent less than one-third of the world's researchers. Closing the gender gap matters not only for fairness, but also for the quality, relevance and impact of science, technology, and innovation.

The 2026 International Day of Women and Girls in Science shifts the focus from recommendations and reflection to showcasing existing good practices and solutions for building more inclusive STEM ecosystems.

World Day of Social Justice

On Nov. 26, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly declared that Feb. 20 would be celebrated annually.



as World Day of Social Justice.

This Day, also known as Social Justice Equality Day, recognizes the need to promote social justice, which includes tackling issues such as poverty, exclusion, gender inequality, unemployment, and human rights.

The 2026 theme is "Empowering Inclusion: Bridging Gaps for Social Justice." This focusses on the importance of inclusion policies and social protections to address systemic inequality.

Altrusa Business Meeting Summary for Jan. 7 and Board Meeting Summary for Jan. 26

The Business Meeting of Altrusa International of Hot Springs Village, AR, Inc. was held Jan. 7, with 19 members in attendance of a total active membership of 35 and one Club Guest present, Elaine Williams.

ACCENT: Presented by Amanda Allen on the District Eight Conference April 24-26.

OLD BUSINESS: Irene Keith, Altrusa project leader for Military Fishing Day, provided an update on plans following an earlier announcement by the HSV Anglers Club that the club had lost its primary sponsor, Lockheed Martin, for the event. The news is good: The Anglers sold 32 packages of walnuts to raise \$660; the Real Housewives of HSV plans to donate proceeds from one of its fundraisers, and a caterer has offered to donate a catered meal for the event. Altrusans will serve the meal, bake desserts for the service members, and clean up afterward. The date for Military Service Day is May 13.

INITIATION: Membership Development Chair Mary Kramer initiated Tara Santillanez into the Club. Her sponsors are Melanie Pederson and Brenda Walls, and Tara will serve on the Communications Committee.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Laurie Herman welcomed the Club's guest, Elaine Williams, a retired teacher. Laurie announced that the Board of

Directors had reluctantly accepted the resignation of Altrusan Jackie Bolster, who sent a letter to the Board dated Dec. 1, 2025. Laurie asked Secretary Amanda Allen to read the letter.

Laurie announced that the Foundation had received a donation from Home Plate Café and Bakery as the Round-up Charity of the Month. Foundation President Melanie Pederson and Club liaison to the Foundation Board, Diane Shaw, accepted the check for \$178.50. Laurie awarded Certificates of Appreciation for work on behalf of the Club, to Melanie Pederson and Joanna Horton, and Finance Chair Diane Shaw presented a certificate to Gail Dann.

Laurie called for nominations for the Nominating Committee, which will prepare a slate of officers for Club members consideration for the 2026-27 Board of Directors. The Club approved a Nominating Committee of Lynda Grasse, Melanie Pederson, Diane Shaw, Amanda Allen, and Martha Smither. (Martha wasn't at the Business Meeting and later declined to serve on the committee.)

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Jackie Wilson reminded committee chairs that if bad weather hits the Village, they should call all of their

committee members to see if they need any assistance.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Diane Shaw said that she had developed new forms for the Club and the Foundation for reporting of donations or expenses. Those forms will be uploaded on Google Drive and printed in Club Yearbooks when new Yearbooks are printed in 2026.

Diane also announced she had purchased 250 promotional pens to distribute at Chamber of Commerce and POA meet and greet events.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Amanda Allen received approval of the Nov. 6, 2025, Business Meeting minutes, which will be filed in the Club's digital archives on Google Drive.

Amanda read two more pieces for correspondence: Harvey's Chapel Baptist Church Food Pantry/Clothes Closet thanked the Club for its donation of \$100. Also, The Daughters of the American Revolution also thanked the club for donations of shoeboxes for veterans at Christmastime.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kelli Langley reviewed financial accounts for the period ending Dec. 31. The Club had assets of \$10,727.06, including \$5,511.98 in a CD. The report will be filed subject to audit.

See Meeting Summaries, Page 5

Committee Highlights

Finance

Diane Shaw, Chair

The Committee has been working on Spring Fling Italiano and looking into new products for the Club's semi-annual Butter Braid bread fundraiser.

Here are some updates:

Spring Fling Italiano: Sixty tickets are in members' hands, with eight tickets paid to date; members have asked for 33 tickets at February Business Meeting. KVRE Take 5 dates have been scheduled and paid for. Valerie or Laurie will be doing the Take 5 on Feb. 2.

Spring Braided Bread Fundraiser: The Committee is getting samples of Pizza and Croissant Crowns to taste-test at the Club's February Business Meeting. We are planning on this fundraiser to start on or before April 6 and end on April 21, to receive orders before Mother's Day

Next Finance Committee meeting is 11 a.m. Feb. 26 at mFORCE Capital, 412 Ponce De Leon Dr.

Membership

Mary Kramer, Chair

The membership committee was pleased to initiate Tara Sanillanez in January. She will be working with the Communications Committee as well as on our projects.

Please continue to invite your friends to meetings. They usually are surprised and impressed with all the good things we do, and often, they want to join us. New members keep our Club vibrant.

Communications

Amanda Allen, Chair

We're working on fundraising publicity, for Spring Fling Italiano in March and the Butter Braid bread sales in April. We had the cover of Village Voice's TV Viewer on Jan. 27 for Spring Fling. Welcome new member Tara Santillanez! Next committee meeting is 3:30 p.m. Feb 11 via Zoom.

Service

Patti Geiser, Valerie Derryberry Co-Chairs

The Snack Fairy project and School Supplies for Mountain Pine are in progress.

Invitations are ready to deliver to students who will be honored at the 4.0 GPA Student Recognition and Scholarship Program luncheon, and other preparations are in place. Dates are March 18 and April 8 and all Club members should try to attend a luncheon.

Chris Hanses

Needs Your Help!

She can't just make up service hours for Club members. Please send her yours for January. Email chanses60@gmail.com

This Month's Accent by Amanda Allen

Why Attend District Conference? Here's the Official Version, and the Unofficial Version

Do you know who's having an anniversary on April 24-26? The annual Altrusa District Eight Conference is turning 70 years old! Even as it reaches what some might call its "mature" years, it's still a vital organization leading Altrusa Clubs in four states – Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

The conference this year is in Bentonville, AR, just a four-hour drive from Hot Springs Village, and that's one compelling reason you should consider going. There are many others.

What happens at Conference? The Altrusa Encyclopedia lists some of the activities:

- 1.The District conducts official business, including electing new District officers, revising bylaws, and passing resolutions to be forwarded to International for action.
- 2.It reviews each Club's progress and recognizes and rewards Club achievements.
- 3.It discusses and defines better ways to plan and carry out Club meetings and service projects.
- 4.It provides leadership training for Club officers and Committee chairs, and for members interested in becoming officers and leading their Clubs.

That's the official description of what happens at Conference, but doesn't it sound kind of dull?

Yes, there is a lot of business to discuss, and the business

gets done and the awards get handed out. Altrusa of HSV is the recipient of the Distinguished Service Club Award for many years running, and yes, we're proud of that. We're also proud of the many other District awards and grants the Club has received for its service projects.

But you can hear about those after the fact, and only official delegates can vote, so why attend Conference? Here's what unofficially happens: It's inspiring to meet so many people who are dedicated to serving their communities and to hear about their service projects. It's an organization of men and women who are not particularly interested in spending money on "things" but would rather spend their time and treasures on improving their communities – raising or donating funds for the kinds of projects Altrusa of HSV does: Scholarships, dictionaries, reading programs and food pantries, to name a few. You'll network with all these women and also spend the weekend getting to know your Club members better and end the weekend with new friends.

Altrusa of HSV pays registration fees for six delegates to Conference every year, three voting delegates and three alternates. Please raise your hand if you'd like to attend. Your expenses will be minimal – the cost of a shared hotel room for two nights and your meals, and the experience is well worth the price.

Upcoming Events

In Our Prayers

Diane Bielanski
 Karen Brines
 Velma Coolidge
 Irene Keith
 Carole Thompson
 Eyvonne Whipple
 Jackie Wilson

January Birthdays

Doris Harder 26



Feb. 2: Groundhog Day
Feb. 5: Business Meeting, McGraw Realtors HSV, 1060 DeSoto Blvd., hosted by Finance Committee. Social at 4 p.m., meeting at 4:30 p.m.
Feb. 7: First Saturday Membership Recruitment Social, Mt. Carmel Community; refreshments and a fun activity making Valentines for residents, 417 Clubhouse, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Feb. 10: Membership Development Committee, home of Mary Kramer.
Feb. 11: International Day of Girls and Women in Science
Feb. 11: Communications Committee, via Zoom, 3:30 p.m.
Feb. 14: Valentine's Day
Feb. 18: Birthday Books for Mountain Pine Elementary School students, 12-2 p.m.
Feb. 20: World Day of Social Justice
Feb. 23: Board meeting, 11 a.m., McGraw Realtors HSV.
Feb. 25: Loan Closet, 1-4 p.m. Volunteers: Chris Hanses and Mary Kramer.
Feb. 26: Service Committee, 9:30 a.m., home of Valerie Derryberry.
Feb. 26: Finance Committee, mForce, 412 Ponce de Leon Dr., Suite A, 11 a.m.
March 5: Business Meeting, McGraw Realtors HSV, 1060 DeSoto Blvd., hosted by Communications Committee. Social at 4 p.m., meeting at 4:30 p.m. to allow time for a speaker. Club officers will be elected.
March 7: Spring Fling Italiano, dinner, dancing and entertainment by Ken Goodman and the TEF Combo, Coronado Community Center, 5-8:30 p.m.
March 18 and April 8: 4.0 GPA Student Recognition and Scholarship Luncheons, Clinton Presidential Library and Museum, 11 a.m.
March 23: Board meeting, 11 a.m., McGraw Realtors HSV.
Save These Dates:
May 13: Military Fishing Day.
Oct. 22: Altrusa of HSV's annual Game Day fundraiser.

One Story of Altrusa Foundation's Impact

When most members of Altrusa of HSV think of Altrusa International Foundation awarding grants to clubs, we think of what's going on in the



International News

United States. But Altrusa has clubs with thousands of members in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, India, Korea, Russia, Ukraine, Ireland, Great Britain, Bermuda, Canada, and New Zealand.

Recently, Dorothy Bowen, a Foundation Trustee and Grants Chair, was asked what grant application most touched her heart among the recent requests. She wrote in the Foundation's Impact newsletter that it was a hard question because so many requests are worthy, supporting literacy, education, food security, health, outreach for seniors and homeless, backpacks for students, and science teaching aids.

"So, what application caught my mind and heart?" she wrote. "For the first time, an independent Altrusa Club in India requested and is receiving a grant to help them create educational opportunities for children in southeastern rural India. Six schools will be helped to provide education to children in grades 3 through 5. Assistance will be provided to children whose families cannot afford for their children to be educated.

"The local Club is actively involved in the project and educational oversight results. The Clubs' members raised almost two-thirds of the funds needed prior to seeking an Altrusa grant and 100 percent of their members are actively involved in the project.

"This grant touched my heart deeply, and I hope it touches yours."
 -Amanda Allen

Make Plans to Attend District Conference In Bentonville April 24-26



District Eight News

The annual District Eight Conference this year is in Bentonville – just a short, four-hour drive to northwest Arkansas – on April 24-26.

It's a perfect opportunity for Club members to experience the conference for the first time and then wonder why they'd never been before.

Club Presidents got a sneak peek on what to expect during a Zoom meeting in January with District Eight Governor Sarah Akin. The Call to Conference will go out to members in early February with full details on workshops and events. Here's what we know:

The Conference will have a military/patriotic theme in keeping with 250th anniversary of the United States. As part of the weekend, members will be participating in a service project to assemble shelf-stable meals for veterans. Clubs will be bringing the ingredients at a cost of about \$10 for each meal kit.

The hotel, Four Points by Sheraton in Bentonville, has 50 rooms reserved for Altrusans – 25 rooms with queen beds and 25 with king beds.

On Friday night, Conference will open with a parade of patriots. Club members could dress up as a historic person connected to the 250th anniversary or represent someone in their family in uniform, for instance.

The Conference will end about noon Sunday for an easy drive back to HSV.

-Amanda Allen

Doubly Blessed In December

Altrusa was the nonprofit of the month in December at Cork & Bottle and at Home Plate Café & Bakery. Valerie Derryberry and Gail Dann accepted a check for \$126.68 from Craig Annen and Sarah Foster at Cork & Bottle and Diane Shaw and Melanie Pederson accepted a check for \$178.56 from Colleen Martin at Home Plate.



Meeting Summaries

Continued from Page 2

FIRST YEAR DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Chris Hanses urged members to attend the Club's Fifth Friday event at Mt. Carmel Community to make Valentines for residents and bring a friend who might be interested in being a member of the Club. (The event is rescheduled 1:30-3:30 p.m. Feb. 7.)

SECOND YEAR DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Kathy Jervis said she has a speaker lined up for the March meeting, and it will begin at 4:30 p.m. to allow time for the speaker.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance: Diane Shaw said she has tickets available to sell for Spring Fling Italiano, the Club's Spring fundraiser that will be held 5-8:30 p.m. March 7. Home Plate Café and Bakery, which is catering the event, needs a final headcount by March 1. The Club hopes to sell 175-200 tickets for an evening of entertainment featuring Ken Goodman of The Entertainment Foundation and the TEF Combo. All Club members should invite their friends and neighbors.

Service: Joan Plautz, who is Project Leader for the Altrusans Read project, said she still needs a Club member to read to third graders at Mountain Pine Elementary. She said the Birthday Books distribution is scheduled for Feb. 18, and she need four Club members to sign up to help.

Membership: Mary Kramer said the Membership Committee will be meeting at Mt. Carmel's Clubhouse, 417 Clubhouse Dr., on Jan. 13 for the regular committee meeting and for instructions on how to make the Valentines for residents at the Fifth Friday Social. (The social is rescheduled 1:30-3:30 p.m. Feb. 7.)

ALTRUSA FOUNDATION OF HSV: Melanie Pederson clarified the Club has received a \$1,500 grant for teacher supplies for Mountain Pine Schools from First Electric's Roundup Program. The Grant's Committee is writing a Spring grant request for \$2,500 for Birthday Books and will include books purchased by Club members for Altrusans Read. She said the Foundation has \$33,719.36 in its account to fund projects in 2026 and \$15,154.60 in a CD.

PRAYER LIST: Irene Keith, who is having knee surgery, and Jackie Wilson, who is undergoing surgery to relieve back pain, will be added to the Prayer List.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m.

Board Meeting

The Board of Directors meeting was held Jan. 26 via Zoom because of snow, ice, and hazardous travel conditions.

Laurie had a full agenda of discussion items, updating the Board on Spring

Fling Italiano plans for the District Eight Conference, the upcoming Fifth Friday Social for membership recruitment, and submission of District Eight Awards, among other topics.

BOARD ACTION

***Club CD:** The Board unanimously approved reinvesting the Club's CD, which matures Feb. 13, for another five months with Relyance Bank at an interest rate of 3.95 percent.

***Awards Submissions:** Board members discussed entries for District Eight and Altrusa International awards. The Club will be entering these awards: Mamie Bass Service Award for the Snack Fairy project, prepared by Valerie Derryberry; Letha H. Brown Literacy Award, for Birthday Books and Altrusans Read, prepared by Melanie Pederson; Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award for the Pill Bottles project, prepared by Patti Geiser; Governor's Distinguished Service Award for Comfort Kits, prepared by Laurie Herman; Rising Star Award for Laurie Herman, prepared by Amanda Allen; Billie Jean Ward Fundraising Award for Game Day, prepared by Laurie Herman; Communications Award, prepared by Amanda Allen; Club Yearbook, prepared by Diane Bielanski; and Club Display Board, prepared by Pam Vernon with assistance from Patti Geiser.

Altrusa International of
Hot Springs Village
Presents:

Spring Fling Italiano

March 7th, 2026

Coronado Center

DOORS OPEN AT 5:00PM

DINNER SERVED AT 6:00PM

Italian Dinner and Dessert

Followed by Entertainment Featuring:

Ken Goodman and the TEF Combo

for your listening and dancing enjoyment

\$50 per person

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