ALTRUSA International | Leading to a Better Community® Hot Springs Village, AR

Monthly Newsletter
Altrusa International of
Hot Springs Village, AR, Inc.

The Dogwood Blossom

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2026

KEY CONTACTS:

Club Officers 2026-2027
President Laurie Herman
1st Vice Pres. Kim Young
2nd Vice Pres. Jackie Wilson
Secretary Joan Plautz
Treasurer Kelli Langley
2nd Year Director Chris Hanses
1st Year Director Pam Vernon
Immed. Past President - Melanie Pederson
BRR Chair and 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

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Featured Picture

Game Day 2026 was another successful fundraiser, and all Altrusans contributed. Some worked on Game Day itself, others secured sponsorships and silent auction items, and many showed up to make soup or craft auction baskets. It was a great team effort! Photos on Page 5.



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Serving with

President's Message – Laurie Herman



Thanksgiving Day is this month. My "Things to be thankful for List" has not changed very much from last year, and is definitely worth a second look:

I am thankful for the leaders of our Club that never give up finding and participating in projects that try to better our community and for the membership that is always there to support all of our projects.

I am thankful that our members continue to introduce more people to our Club. That tells me we must be doing something right if members are willing to encourage their friends to join us.

I am thankful for the grant writing skills of Melanie Pederson. We received not ONE but TWO grants from the Hot Springs Village Community Foundation. One is for the Dictionary Project, $972 and the other is for the Snack Fairy Project, $2,000.

I am SO thankful that it is no longer 95 degrees outside!

At the end of September, many of our members, once again, chose to take part in the Village Walk for Cancer Research – a disease that in one way or another has affected all of us or someone we know. Thank you to all of you who participated!

Wow! Another Successful Game Day. I want to thank each one of you for your support! Whether you were working prior to the big the day behind the scenes or at the event, we proved again – we can do it. It may not take a whole village – but it does take almost the whole club to pull it off! Great Job Everyone! (See story and photos on Page 5.)

Don't forget to bring your Christmas shoe boxes stuffed with goodies for male or female veterans to the Nov. 5 meeting. Call Patti Geiser or Melanie Pederson if you missed the instructions. Veterans Day is Nov. 11 – don't forget to thank a veteran for their service!

Butter Braid Bread fundraising is starting again on Nov. 2, for early December delivery – see Kayla Nobles or Diane Shaw for more information. We will also be ushering for the Children's Concert in Hot Springs on Nov. 12 – see Martha Smither for more information. Don't forget to sign up for the Christmas Party at the DeSoto Club on Dec. 10. We will gather at 4:30 p.m. and it's always a fun time.

Laurie

November Days to Observe: Elimination of Violence Against Women, World Diabetes Day

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women takes place on Nov. 25. This marks the start of the 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence running through Dec. 10 (Human Rights Day). The 2026 theme is "End Violence Against Women and Girls; Ensure justice, protect survivors, end impunity."

This day was designated by the U.N. General Assembly in 1999. It honors the memory of the Mirabal sisters, three Dominican political activists who were murdered on Nov. 25, 1960, for opposing the Trujillo dictatorship. Their courage and sacrifice became a symbol of women's resistance against oppression and violence.

Approximately one in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. The U.N. chose this date to transfer the sisters' tragic story into a global call to inspire efforts to protect women worldwide.

Diabetes Day

World Diabetes Day 2026 is Nov. 14, marking the start of a new two-year campaign by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO)). The 2026 theme is "Early Action on Diabetes."

Over 589 million adults live with diabetes worldwide and this is projected to reach 853 million by 2050. More than 40 percent of people with diabetes are undiagnosed. The WHO aims to diagnose 80 percent of all people living with diabetes by 2030.

The initiative encourages people to learn the symptoms such as increased thirst, frequent urination, tiredness, and blurred vision -- and to seek timely care.

The campaign highlights the importance of identifying diabetes early to prevent severe life-threatening complications like loss of vision and kidney failure.

Altrusa Business Meeting Summary for Oct. 1 and Board Meeting Summary for Oct. 26

The Business Meeting of Altrusa of HSV was held Oct. 1 at McGraw Realtors HSV with 28 members in attendance of a total active membership of 34.

ACCENT: Presented by Amanda Allen on Mamie Bass' vision for Altrusa.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Kim Young and Laurie Herman will be doing a Podcast with the Chamber on the 2nd of October. You can hear the podcast on the Chamber's site.

The Club received a Club 52 Patch from International for contributions and charter membership in Club 52. The Club is looking for a volunteer to sew the patch on our banner.

The Christmas Party will be start on Thursday, Dec. 10 at 4:30 p.m. The signup sheet is on the Opportunity Table. Be sure to choose what you want for dinner.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Laurie Herman

Diane Bielanski has resigned as BRR Chair. Jackie Wilson will now serve as both Parliamentarian and BRR Chair. Many thanks to Diane for all her years of service to our Club! Diane will continue to serve as our Webmaster. Brenda Smith, the District Eight and International BRR Chair, has shared comments about our bylaw changes regarding our officer terms recommended by the Altrusa HSV Board. A motion was made by Joan Schoonover and seconded by Martha Smither to pass the Board recommendation of the Bylaw change. It reads as follows: Under Article XI Section 2. Tenure - Each Officer, other than the Treasurer, shall be elected to a one (1) or two (2) year term. The Treasurer shall be elected to a two (2) year term. No Officer shall hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms. Any part of a term equaling or exceeding one-half (1/2) of the regular term shall be considered a term in deciding eligibility for reelection. The motion failed due to a lack of a 10-day notice that must be given to all members. A copy of the motion will be sent to all members, and we will address the motion at our Nov. 5 meeting.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Jackie Wilson reminded The Club to sign up for the Loan Closet at the Opportunity Table. She also stated that a walker from the Loan Closet was seen at a local resale store. She informed them that it could not be sold but should be returned to the Loan Closet. Please be aware that if you see an item being sold with the Loan Closet label on it, it should be returned to the Loan Closet.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Kim Young

The Spring Fling is scheduled for Saturday, March 6. Jubilation Jazz will be the entertainment and will be presenting a Big Band Radio Show. Home Plate has been selected as the caterer and will be serving pot roast and will also serve a vegetarian/gluten free option.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Joan Plautz

The minutes of Sept. 3, 2026 Business Meeting were approved and will be filed in the Club's digital archives on Google Drive. Thank you notes were sent to Adrienne Cohen and to the HSV Life Magazine for the article about our Club and the history of Altrusa.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kelli Langley

The Monthly Financials were sent out to all members. Our cash account balance as of 9/30/2026 is $5,604.85. Our 5-month CD balance as of 9/30/2026 is $5,675.52. Total account balance as of 9/30/26 is $11,280.37 She reminded members to RSVP to the Business Meeting.

FIRST YEAR DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Pam Vernon

The Scrapbook needs pictures so please submit them to Pam. Please send Pam photos of you reading to students during Altrusans Read.

Our speaker Nov. 5 will be Trevor Lewin, who will be discussing computer safety tips. The meeting starts at 4:30 p.m.

SECOND YEAR DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Chris Hanses reported that she is receiving about a 60 percent response on the service hours on the first of the month – thanks to the reminder notice that is being sent out.

See Meeting Summaries, Page 7

Committee Highlights

Communications
Amanda Allen, Chair

Second Year Director Chris Hanses, our expert on the ins-and-outs of the Online Member Directory, has agreed to keep the Club's Google Calendar up-to-date in addition to the Online Member Directory's calendar. Please thank her (or offer condolences!) for helping keep members informed of Club events, dates and times.
Committee members and Altrusans who love taking photographs have had quite a number of photo-ops over the past few weeks, including Military Fishing Day, Basket Day, Vegetable Chop Day, HSV Community Foundation awards, Game Day and Fifth Friday.
Melanie Pederson and Diane Shaw also put together a flyer for the Butter Braid bread and cookies fundraiser.

Finance
Diane Shaw, Chair

The Finance Committee will meet at 11 a.m. Nov. 17 at McGraw Realtors HSV. Among other business will be a review and wrap-up of our 2026 Game Day.

Membership
Diane McMillan, Chair

Our annual Christmas Party is coming up on Dec. 10. Please make plans to attend and make your reservation with Patti Geiser before Nov. 11. The party will be socializing and dinner in the private room at the DeSoto Club, and Patti needs to tell the restaurant how many to expect.



Grants
Melanie Pederson, Chair

The Hot Springs Village Community Foundation awarded Altrusa of HSV two grants in an awards ceremony on Oct. 21. The Club received $2,000 for the Snack Fairy Project and $972 to provide Dictionaries for Third Graders at three area elementary schools, Jessieville, Fountain Lake and Cutter Morning Star. (See photos on Page 7 and note the appropriately attired and eye-catching Snack Fairy.

Service
Patti Geiser, Lynda Grasse Co-Chairs

At the Committee meeting Oct. 9, Dorothy Fager presented a new project that would provide monetary assistance for Jessieville and Mountain Pine high school students pursuing non-traditional education programs.
The Board has approved this project, on condition that funds can be raised to support it. It will be presented to membership at the Nov. 5 Business Meeting.
The Snack Fairy took treats to the Cedar Mountain Boys & Girls Club Oct. 15.
Dictionaries for Third Graders will be delivered in November; sign-up sheets will be at the Nov. 5 Business Meeting.
The first Birthday Books of the school year were delivered Oct. 7 to Mountain Pine Elementary students who had birthdays in the first four-month period. (Photos on Page 8.)
Altrusans Read is also under way with volunteers assigned to teachers and visiting their classrooms weekly or as often as the teacher and the reader can arrange it. (Photos on Page 8)
Altrusans delivered food on Make A Difference Day, Oct. 24 this year, to Harvey's Chapel Food Pantry and Hope Movement.
Bring your wrapped Christmas Shoeboxes for Veterans to the Nov. 5 Business Meeting. (See article on Page 7 for suggested items to put in the box.)

This Month's Accent by Amanda Allen

Mamie Bass Would Be Amazed and Proud of Altrusa International's Accomplishments Today

Mamie Bass, who founded Altrusa International in 1917, would be so impressed with the organization she created almost 100 years ago.
In 1930, the beginning of the Great Depression, she seemed to see into the future when she wrote this poetic essay for the National Altrusan.
"No ancient tale of history, no fable or fiction, ancient or modern, hold more of romance for me than the story of Altrusa.
"Always she has been to me a distinct personality, the composite of all of us who can appreciate her even a little, and love her very much, and she is a something beside the sum total of us.
"Always she has seemed to be leading us onward — not as if we created her but as if she existed apart from our efforts, and that she has added something to our lives.
"It has been a rare experience to have been present at the very beginning and to have seen our dream, our far-off vision, become real.
"The real Altrusa was created by our own members. Our aspirations, our hopes, our standards for Altrusa came from within our own organization, not from outside.
"Altrusa is truly a splendid vision. She shall continue to be an inspiration to women, a builder for good wherever she is known, so long as we feel her reality in our hearts, and so long as we follow her with sincerity, with unselfishness and wisdom.
"Fortunate are we who have had the joy of working for her."

Mamie Luella Bass
National Altrusan, April 1930

In Our Prayers

Velma Coolidge
Laurie Herman and her husband, Bill
Doris Michaelson's daughter Alexandra
Lloyd and family
Suzi Poulsen's sister
Debra Kelly
Ginna Watson
Mary Jane Weiss
Eyvonne Whipple

November Birthdays

Pam Vernon	Nov. 12
Diane Bielanski	Nov. 14
Kayla Nobles	Nov. 16
Kathy Jervis	Nov. 17



Upcoming Events

Below are the upcoming events for this month. Please reference the Altrusa Google Calendar or Online Membership Calendar for any real-time updates that may occur during the month.

Nov. 2-17: Members will be selling Butter Braid frozen pastry and Wooden Spoon cookies as a fundraiser (more information at the Business Meeting and on Page 6).
Nov. 5: Business Meeting, McGraw Realtors HSV, 1060 DeSoto Blvd., hosted by Service Committee. Social at 4 p.m., meeting at 4:30 p.m. to allow time for a speaker, Trevor Lewin with Computer Tutor. Please bring wrapped Veterans Shoe Boxes for donation at Christmas.
Nov. 9: Altrusa assists the DAR in placing flags on veterans' graves at CedarVale Cemetery, 9 a.m.
Nov. 9: Dictionaries for Third Graders delivered to Jessieville Elementary, 8 a.m.
Nov. 11: Dictionaries for Third Graders delivered to Fountain Lake Elementary, 11:30 a.m.
Nov. 11: Communications Committee, via Zoom, 3:30 p.m.
Nov. 12: Arkansas Symphony Orchestra's Children's Concert, at the Oaklawn Events Center in Hot Springs, 8:30 a.m.; we will go in carpools.
Nov. 13: Altrusa assists DAR in removing and cleaning flags at CedarVale Cemetery, 10 a.m. (rain date Nov. 14, 10 a.m.)
Nov. 13: Service Committee, 10 a.m., McGraw Realtors HSV; all Club members invited.
Nov. 13-15: Belk's Charity Sale, always a good fundraiser for Altrusa; sign-up sheets and details will be available at the Nov. 5 Business Meeting
Nov. 14: World Diabetes Day
Nov. 16: Membership Development Committee, 9:30 a.m., McGraw Realtors HSV.
Nov. 17: Finance Committee and Game Day wrap-up, 11 a.m., McGraw HSV Realtors.
Nov 18: Dictionaries for Third Graders delivered to Cutter Morning Star Elementary, 10 a.m.
Nov. 23: Board meeting, 11 a.m., McGraw Realtors HSV.
Nov. 25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
Nov. 25: Loan Closet, 1-4 p.m. Volunteers Adrienne Cohen and Diane McMillan.
Dec. 3: Business Meeting will not be held.
Dec. 10: Christmas Party, DeSoto Club, 4:30 p.m.- 8 p.m., hosted by Communications Chair Amanda Allen and Service Chairs Patti Geiser and Lynda Grasse.
Dec. 28: Board meeting, 11 a.m., McGraw Realtors HSV.

District Eight Club Presents Zoom On Retaining, Expanding Membership

District Eight News

Mary Mann, president of Altrusa International of Fayetteville, AR, Inc., led a Zoom presentation on Oct. 20 with the intent of helping clubs with 15 or fewer members with retention and expansion of their membership.
Although the primary goal was to help smaller clubs, everyone was invited to join the Zoom meeting, because you never know what tips you can pick up. Those attending were reminded of the District Eight Revitalization Funding Request Form that can be used to hold a membership recruiting event. District Eight can grant $100 to a club for such an event, and Altrusa of HSV used one of those grants last in February to make Valentines for residents of Mt. Carmel Community. We're eligible to apply for another grant in 2027.

-Laurie Herman

Make Plans for Altrusa Convention, July 21-24

International News

Altrusa International's 2027 International Convention – the 60th for our service organization – is fast approaching. It's July 21-24 and it may be the best opportunity for members of Altrusa of HSV to attend. The convention is in Columbus, Ohio, a short flight or a 10-hour drive away.
Think about whether you can spare a few days to attend. Expenses will be minimal as Club members always share rooms. Our Club also pays registration fees for three delegates and three alternates, and the seminars and ideas you pick up from other Club members are worth the registration fee.

The convention planners have kicked off their campaign for corporate sponsors to support the convention and the service club's work. Corporate sponsorship levels range from $500-$10,000.

If you know a business or corporation that would like more information on sponsorship, contact Kantrice R. Rose, Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. Executive Director, at (312) 789-4414 or by email at kantrice@altrusa.org.

-Amanda Allen

Service Hours Please!

Make Chris Hanses' life easier – please report your service hours every monthly using the categories of Altrusa Service, Member Service and Community Service.
Call or text Chris at (501) 209-0316 or email her at chanses60@gmail.com

Game Day 2026: Planning + Effort + Friends and Supporters = Successful Fundraising



What a Game Day!
Aside from being a lot of fun, Game Day was a great fundraiser for the Club.
The Club netted $5,189.64 to put toward our many community service projects, and we couldn't have done it without everyone's help.
Some members invited friends and bought a table or sold tickets, some gathered door prizes and Silent Auction items or sponsorships, some worked hard on Basket Day or Veggie Chop Day, some prepared salads and desserts in advance, and others did Silent Auction set-up.
Still more members were on hand for the day itself – setting the tables, greeting guests, making announcements, handing out door prizes, staffing the Silent Auction, serving tea, water and coffee, or working in the kitchen cooking soup, plating and frosting desserts and serving guests.
And when it was time to clean up and pack everything out to our cars, plenty of members pitched in.

Many Cooks Did Not Spoil the Soup

Instead, they made a great meal. Below (from left, Beth Annen, Bonnie Crader, Kitchen Czar Kim Young; Joan Plautz, Patti Geiser, Beth Annen and Lynda Grasse; and Jackie Wilson, Bonnie Crader, Kayla Nobles and her daughter Lilly.











And Those Cooks Had 'Staff'

On Vegetable Chop Day, members chopped celery, onions and carrots for the soup, prepared the soup's orzo and cooked and seasoned the meat in the wonderfully equipped kitchen of Martha Smither's home. We also invaded her home for Basket Day (see some of our handiwork below).











Greeting, Auctioneering

Our greeters/ticket takers and auction closers handled the crowds, and President Laurie Herman kept things moving with formal welcome remarks, door prizes and announcements.



Ready, Set, Sell: The Second Fall Fundraiser for Altrusa of HSV Will Launch Tomorrow

Altrusa of HSV's second Fall fundraiser launches tomorrow, Nov. 2, and the good news is, these products sell themselves – many buyers are repeat customers.
Here's what you need to know:
We will be selling Butter Braid breads and Wooden Spoon cookies. The deadline for sales is Nov. 17, two weeks away.
You should have received an email from My Fundraising Place on Oct. 28 that you can forward to friends who will be able to place orders online under your name. You can also order for them online, or use a paper order form that will be available at the Nov. 5 Business Meeting. If you did not get the My Fundraising Place email, check your spam folders, then notify Diane Shaw.
Orders will arrive in early December, in plenty of time to bake for the holidays.
If you're new to Altrusa, breads come as frozen pastry that you can put in your freezer and use when the occasion arises. The breads thaw and rise for eight hours or overnight and they're ready to bake and impress your guests.
Flavors this year are: apple, strawberry, cinnamon or cream cheese, $18 each; Bavarian Crème and Four Cheese & Herb, $19 each.
A limited number of blueberry breads ($18 each) and caramel rolls ($19 each) also may be available, but the supplier cannot guarantee that they will be and we will not know that until after our sales deadline.
Some of our customers love these two products, so tell them that and that you will contact them as soon as we're notified.
Cookies also arrive frozen, and each package makes 40 or more cookies, depending on how large you want them to be.
Flavors are chocolate chip, triple chocolate, oatmeal cranberry white chunk, peanut butter and snickerdoodle, $22, and white chunk macadamia nut, $24.
Contact Diane Shaw with questions about the sale.

Military Fishing Day: Altrusa Honors Those Who Serve

Military Fishing Day 2026 – held on Oct. 8 this year because Balboa Lake levels were too low to launch boats in May – was a fine day for fishing.
The temperature was just right, pleasant but not hot, the fish were eager for their weigh-in and release, and the 21 service men and 4 service women enjoyed a delightful morning organized by the Anglers Club of HSV.
After the weigh-in, the service members from Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville were treated to a fine barbecue meal, with baked beans and potato salad (catered by Clampit's Country Kitchen), and desserts prepared by members of Altrusa International of HSV, who also served the meal. Then some of the men and women got bragging rights and big fish stories and everyone got a gift card.
At the end of the day, they left with fond memories and with baggies of cookies and brownies to share (or not) with their friends at the base.



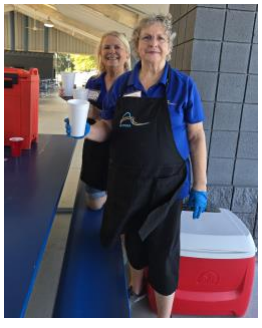


Below: Irene Keith, (right), who organized the project for Altrusa of HSV, poses with caterer Joey Clampit and Patti Geiser.













Altrusa Receives Grants for Snack Fairy, Dictionaries

The Hot Springs Village Community Foundation has awarded Altrusa of HSV two generous grants: $2,000 for the Snack Fairy to deliver snacks to areas schools and to the Cedar Mountain Boys & Girls Club, and another $972 for Dictionaries for Third Graders at three area elementary schools.

Don't Forget the Veterans!

Please fill a Christmas Shoebox for Veterans.

Bring your wrapped box to the Nov. 5 meeting. Label the box male or female and place a Christmas card inside the box thanking the veterans for their service.

Suggestions for the boxes include personal care items (deodorants, toothpaste, lotions, shampoos); socks; hats; lap blankets; games and puzzles; word games; notepads; ballpoint pens; playing cards; snacks and treats such as sugar-free hard candy or gum, sugar-free cookies, crackers or dried fruit; and something whimsical, such as a holiday mug, holiday figure or Santa cap.

Meeting Summaries

Continued from Page 2

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communications: Amanda Allen

Please be at Game Day by 11 a.m. for pictures. Also, take photos at Fishing Day for an article.

Literacy Challenge: Please keep track of the number of books we donate in the next three months (Sept. through Nov.), take pictures and report them to Amanda Allen. The goal is to donate one book per member for 90 days.

Thank you to Diane Bielanski for updating the yearbook.

Service: Patti Geiser and Lynda Grasse

Dictionaries for Third-Graders project leader Suzi Paulsen has received the dictionaries and a sign-up sheet to label them is available on the Opportunity Table; this will be done on Oct. 14, 1 p.m.

Shoe boxes for Vets -- please have your shoeboxes wrapped and with a Christmas card inside and bring them to the Nov. 5 Business Meeting. Please label them male or female.

Birthday Books will be delivered on Oct. 7.

Trunk or Treat will be held on Oct. 31 at the Woodlands. Please donate candy. Thank you to Kim Young and Elaine Williams for spearheading this activity.

The Cedar Mountain Boys & Girls Club made and sent a thank you poster to Altrusa for all of their snacks. Next delivery date Oct. 15 at 4 p.m.

Make a Difference Day will be on Oct. 24. We will deliver food to Harvey's Chapel Food Pantry and Hope Movement.

Military Fishing Day is Oct. 8 at 11 a.m., at the Balboa Pavillion. Get your cookies to Irene Keith prior to the event.

Membership: Diane McMillan reported that the Oct. 30 Fifth Friday Event will be held at the DeSoto Club. A signup sheet is available on the Opportunity Table.

Finance: Diane Shaw

Diane reported that 109 Game Day tickets have been paid for. You have until noon Oct. 16 to sell tickets and notify Diane. We are in good shape regarding door prizes. We need ribbons and stuffing for the baskets. Letters for sponsors and confirmation of donation letters are available. Please give these to either Diane Shaw or Kayla Nobles.

Butter Braid bread fundraiser is Nov. 2-17. Pick up will be early December, date to be determined, at Patti Geiser's home.

Grants: Melanie Pederson

We received $972 for dictionaries and $2,000 for Snack Fairy. Both grants were from HSV Community Foundation.

At 10:30 a.m. Oct. 21 at the Coronado Center, the grants will be awarded.

HSV Community Foundation will be having recycling on Oct. 31.

ALTRUSA FOUNDATION OF HSV:

Melanie Pederson presented the Foundation's financial report. Total Budgeted Income for 2026-2027 is $47,575.00. Cash on Hand and CD Balance as of Sept. 26 is $40,818.60

Next Business Meeting: Thursday, Nov. 5, at McGraw Realtors HSV. Social Time: 4 p.m.; speaker at 4:30. Hosted by the Service Committee.

Board Actions

The Board met Oct. 26 and took the following actions:

*Voted to purchase a digital photo frame for use at conventions, conferences and marketing opportunities such as POA Meet & Greets. Kim Young made a motion and Jackie Wilson seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

*Voted to recommend a proposed service project to provide monetary assistance for students attending non-traditional education programs such as trade or technical schools if the Altrusa of HSV Foundation has sufficient funds to fund the project. Joan Plautz made the motion, and Kim Young seconded it.

The service proposal reads as follows: "Provide to at least 6 students or no more than 10 non-restrictive monetary assistance for students attending non-traditional education programs from Jessieville High School and Mountain Pine High School." The motion passed unanimously.

-Joan Plautz

Focus on Literacy: Altrusa's Birthday Books and Altrusans Read Begin for the New School Year





Above: Mountain Pine Elementary students who had birthdays in the first quarter of the school year select their very own book to take home with the help of project leader Joan Plautz (above left), and Altrusans Kim Young and Chris Hanses and Doris Michaelson, with counselor Brandy Blees.
Below: Kim Young (left) and Elaine Williams read to their classrooms at Mountain Pine elementary. Pam Vernon is project leader for Altrusans Read and the kids love hearing a good story. In return, the Altrusa readers often get student hugs when they visit.







Martha Smither To Receive Honor for Work Promoting The Arts

Martha Smither will receive the 2026 Arts Ambassador Award Nov. 7 from the Hot Springs Area Cultural Alliance.
Martha is the founder and board president of Arkansas Learning Through the Arts as well as a Board Member of the Hot Springs/Hot Springs Village Symphony Guild.
She also organizes the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Children's Concert in Hot Springs.

"Martha does much more than support the arts – she creates opportunities for children to experience them," Martha Jane Murray, HSACA Board chair, said. "Through Arkansas Learning Through the Arts and the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Children's Concert, she has opened young minds to music, creativity and new ways of learning. Her vision, generosity and dedication truly represent what it means to be an arts ambassador."