

EDITH DeBUSK PRESIDENT'S AWARD

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL CLUB REPORT

Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

Nancy R. Rohm
2016-2017 President

Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.
President's Year End Report, Edith DeBusk Award Submission
Nancy Rohm, 2016-2017 President
Every Day is a Celebration! Service, Leadership, Friendship

Put on your walking shoes and come along with me down Memory Lane. All of the things you have done this year, compressed into one report are impressive; you make me so proud.

Thank you, Richardson Altrusans, for letting me represent you as your president this year. It is such an honor to lead one of the world's biggest Altrusa Clubs, with members whose hearts for service are even bigger! You are the sisters I never had. Your caring knows no boundaries. I had the best job in the world this year with you supporting me!

We know the success of the year is because of all of the hard work each one of you contributed. You served others while having fun together. And, you engaged in the work of running the club during our business and board meetings. For that, I offer you a Special Thank You.

You followed my lead, and you wove my theme, *"Every Day is a Celebration! Service, Leadership, Friendship"*, into many of your activities throughout the year. I selected the goals from our Strategic Plan. Using the plan, you met or exceeded every goal I set forth. The total volunteer hours you reported were a whopping 20,494.

Goal #1 - Service - Improve the quality of life in the community. The objective was, *"Serve the needs of our Community"*, and serve you did!

Our Strategic Plan called for one point person for our Service Committees. I appointed Board Vice-President, Gerry Carron, to be our Service Chair. She did a great job meeting regularly with committee leaders, letting the board know the great work the committees were doing, and attending all the Foundation Meetings on behalf of the Board. Being such a large club with so

many committees, the committees plan the projects, but each of you are encouraged to participate wherever your heart takes you!

Jane Merz and Genevieve Hamulak, led the events at **Ability House**, improving the quality of the lives of the adults who reside there. These adults have varying degrees of Cerebral Palsy and other developmental disabilities. The birthday parties you gave for Robert, Shelly, Vera, Henry and Kathleen were very special. Each resident has his or her own personality and way of communicating pleasure when we come. In December, you decorated their tree and sang holiday songs with them. You shared friendship, laughter, parties, gifts, and, of course, their favorite drink, Dr. Pepper! Twenty-three percent of you served in some way. Your budget was \$455.00.

The women and families at the Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County, THE NETWORK of Community Ministries, Hopes Door and New Beginnings Shelters, and The Counseling Place were better served this year by the **Community Outreach** Committee under the leadership of Gloria Sandoval and Jane Tucker. The hands-on services ranged from the twelve percent of you who helped donors at The Children's Advocacy Center unload Christmas gifts from their vehicles, recording the delivery, and tagging the gifts for the children; to the ten percent who filled Tooth Fairy Bags with dental products at The NETWORK; to the thirty-six percent who contributed in some way with the handmade pillow cases for Hopes Door Shelter; to those who delivered bookcases and reading books to Hopes Door, and gift cards for the stressed counselors at The Counseling Place. Additionally, you gave money to the Richardson Police Department for Overnight Safe-Haven, a program for families in need of temporary housing protection from domestic violence. You worked with a \$2,165.00 budget donating 177 hours of service.

Supported by the **International Relations** Committee, led by Samantha Slaight and Freda Handley, we participated in 'Feeding Children Everywhere'. Fourteen members volunteered on a Sunday afternoon, filling 1,728 packets. These food packets will feed hungry children both locally and abroad. Full tummies certainly make for a Better Quality of Life!

The International Relations committee also made the quality of life better world-wide, with gifts to TeachHati, HELPS International, Heifer International, UNICEF, and the establishment of a Choose Kind Library in Haiti. Many of you contributed items for Mike's Kids, a group that serves immigrant children in the Texas Rio Grande Valley. You worked with a budget of \$1,588.00 budget this year.

Locally, our International Relations Committee arranged and was the main sponsor for an art contest for Richardson ISD 4th, 5th and 6th graders in recognition of World Peace Day. Early in the school year, Altrusan Janie Jaquier, met with the art teachers explaining the event. This year, the theme was, "Imagine a World of Peace." The theme opened up topics of discussion for the children at school, allowing them to channel their ideal peaceful world into art. Altrusans framed each entry and the pictures were displayed in the Richardson Public Library. In late November, we held a reception at the library. The young artists, their parent(s), many art teachers, Altrusans, and City Council Representatives attended. Snacks were served. The children received accolades about their artwork and winners were announced. The children who won were very excited with the honor of winning - and also the gift cards they received. It takes twenty-seven hours of the work of several people to prepare and put on this event. It involved nineteen percent of our members and you spent \$72.00 of the International Committee's budget on it.

The **Education** Committee leaders, Betsy Meggs and Linda McCollum, assisted Bobbi Klein in arranging Choose Kind Libraries to be placed in more Richardson ISD schools. The Education Committee focused their efforts on enriching literacy for the Pre-Kindergarten students at Terrace Elementary. They provided Literacy Backpacks, a Teddy Bear Time Program, and a Manners Party. The Teddy Bear Time Program modeled to parents (whose first language isn't English) how to read to and work with their children on literacy skills. They gave each child a personal tote bag to bring to each session, and the child received a new book of his or her own every week. And, they did the Manners Party. This is a real favorite with children practicing "Please," "Thank You," and "You are Welcome" and receiving a book from a friend to take home and keep. Thirty-eight percent of our members helped at Terrace School for a total of 189 hours of service.

In addition to paying the costs associated with the hands-on service above, we paid for the pre-K children to be bussed to Santa's Village, for busses to take the school choir to sing at Atria Senior Living Facility, purchased admission tickets for the fourth graders to go on a field trip to the Perot Museum, and purchased tickets for up to ten pre-K children to attend children's performances at the Eisemann Center. The total Education Committee budget was \$1,750.00.

The **Seniors** Committee, led by Lynn Solomon and Dean Burroughs, didn't sit down all year! They enriched lives at senior facilities by offering monthly BINGO at one facility where twelve Altrusans volunteered, and twice-a-year Auctions at two facilities where a total of twenty-five Altrusans volunteered. These events, though important, weren't our only service. It was the time we spent with the seniors, sharing laughter and giving them the gift of our time.

Quarterly, six members spent three hours each, helping rotate large-print books from the Richardson Public Library to several senior living facilities in our community. For this project, we partnered with the Richardson Men's Exchange Club.

We also facilitated, "Tie One On for Father's Day" in June at Friends Place Adult Day Services, with about seventy people attending and ten Altrusans each volunteering three hours in addition to the "Mother's Day Tea" in May with about one hundred people attending and nineteen Altrusans volunteering three or four hours each. You brought cupcakes for the Friends Place Fall Festival Cake Walk and you donated fiberfill for their pillow project. About twenty-three percent of you volunteered for the Seniors Committee. You worked with a budget of \$255.00

Altrusans who joined the 2015-16 year, had their own **New Members** committee led by Immediate Past President, Cindy McIntyre. They created Birthday Bags with age-appropriate items for youngsters through teens, and placed a book in each bag. The bags were given to The Counseling Place for children's birthdays. With a \$50.00 budget and some in-kind donations, you truly made a difference with your **Make a Difference Day project!**

We did a repeat performance of **Kindness Action Ninja (KAN) weekend** in April, again led by our creative Cindy McIntyre. This was a club-wide effort. We asked citizens to do acts of kindness that weekend. This year, we reached two underserved groups in our population, the youngest and the oldest. Richardson ISD second and third graders in the four schools where we have our Choose Kind Libraries, created over eight hundred greeting cards. You delivered those cards on a Saturday at lunchtime and interacted with those living in senior facilities. They were pleased with the cards and thrilled to have visitors.

Altrusans gave **Grants** in the amount of \$6,000.00 through the committee led by Janet Vance. They awarded grants to six of the thirteen grant requests received, selecting those grants

that would serve the greatest number of our diverse Richardson population. The grants awarded helped RISD school children attend a program offered through the Richardson Symphony, sent underprivileged youngsters to children's performances at the Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, supported the Richardson Adult Literacy Center, the Richardson Reads One Book Program, and the Richardson Arts Incubator.

We will give Scholarships totaling \$6,500.00 to three deserving high school graduates. The ten-member **Scholarship** Committee was led by Pat Hansen and, substitute chair, Brenda Boston. They spent many hours reading the fifty-nine Scholarship Applications (approximately ten pages each), and six hours interviewing the finalists, then selecting the three awardees. We honored these graduating seniors at our April Dinner Meeting. Each one brought a guest and, after dinner, told us about themselves and their plans. Scholarship money will be sent directly to each college in time for fall registration.

To learn what needs were unmet in our community, Bonnie Perry and Jean Stuart led our **Community Initiative** Committee. In August, they held a roundtable discussion with the community leaders we interviewed individually in the Spring. From the needs the community leaders pinpointed, the Education Committee will continue to focus on Teddy Bear Time. We obtained the licensing rights for the materials we will use. The International Committee engaged Freda Handley to participate in the ongoing meetings of the Richardson Interfaith Alliance, with the goal of identifying service opportunities for the club. The Seniors Committee, at the request of the Richardson Senior Center, will do a project later this month, *Altrusa Salutes Older American Month! "Be Informed and be Prepared"*. We had a poster created to advertise the event and displayed it at the Senior Center. We had brochures designed and printed and made these available at the Senior Center, the Public Library, and the two Recreation Centers. The event will be in two weeks on Wednesday and Friday. Five Altrusans have signed up to help each

time, assisting the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Emergency Preparedness Department, and the Animal Shelter hand-out materials and give information to the seniors. We are in the process of preparing for our Library and the Police Department a printed and online brochure of Social Services available in our community. The brochure will impact many people and improve the quality of life of those needing these services. The Community Initiative Committee worked with a \$500.00 budget.

All of our Service Committees met the goal of improving the quality of life for many, many people.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the sad loss we experienced in June, with the death of beloved Altrusan, Carolyn Swanson. The family asked Altrusa to do the local remembrance service for Carolyn. A few Altrusa members stepped up and held a beautiful service in her memory. Many of you and other friends and family members attended to pay their respects and to Celebrate Carolyn's life of service.

Goal #2 - Marketing – Enhance Image and increase visibility to community. The objective was, *Implement a Marketing/Branding Plan*

Wow did you achieve this goal! Due to all your hard work, Richardson ISD recognized us at their annual gala, where the school board presented our club with the Spirit of RISD Award. This was a large, formal affair with many community leaders and RISD administrators in attendance. This was a surprise to us and not anything we applied for or knew anything about until they called to tell us a week prior to the gala!

The staff of our city's monthly newsletter, *Richardson Today*, reached out to us to see if we were doing a KAN project again this Spring. We promptly submitted an article that was

published on the front page of the newsletter prior to our April Event. *Richardson Today* is mailed to 43,500 addresses and posted on the city's website.

Additionally, enhancing our image, Sarah Nesbit created business cards for us to carry and hand out to prospective members. These are classy looking, something we will be proud to give to others. The brochures Sarah is creating will give us another tool to let others know about us.

The **Strategic Planning** Committee, led by Kay Hopper and Mary Osentowski, developed the Strategic Plan for '16-'17 into a user-friendly form, which we referenced throughout the year. This Spring, the club provided input to the committee at our March Dinner meeting. From that, the committee developed the '17-'18 plan and also a three-year plan, both of which were approved in April.

Another Objective was to, "*Establish and Maintain a Communication Plan for Membership*". We maintained communication within our membership by way of our website, (thank you Kimberly Kierce and Jean Stuart as back-up) by way of our monthly newsletter, *Tidings*, (thank you Robin Smith, Kay Hopper and Genevieve Hamulak) and through our Facebook Page (thank you Barbra Cornelius).

Goal #3 - Membership – Retain, Recruit and Involve. The objective was, "*Increase net membership by 10%*".

The **Recruitment** Committee, co-chaired by Nancy Crowe and Sherri White, exceeded their goal. In the official reports I file, you will see a 13% increase in membership from the previous year. This is a phenomenal increase for a club our size. Our total membership, as of this evening, is ninety-four, which includes our newest members initiated in April and May, our dual, and emeritus members. The official report covers membership from April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016, and it does not include our dual or emeritus members. That number is eighty-three

members. The Recruitment Committee shared “40 Members in 4 Minutes”, hosted well-attended Fall and Spring Orientation/Re-Orientations, and conducted six interesting initiations for our sixteen new members-joining between June 2016 through May 4, 2017. Something we do really well is Pre-Orient our incoming members before we initiate them. Pam Johnson ably took on this role this year.

Another Objective was to, “*Retain 90% of current membership*”. That goal was met also. The **Retention** Committee, co-chaired by Laura Trainor-Collins and Jenn Rohm, made every effort to keep members connected and engaged by planning frequent social events ranging from a Moustache Party to a Book Swap-pot luck dinner, a Mardi Gras party and a Brewery tour. Committee members kept up with the popular SPOTLIGHT where a pair of members shared interesting facts about each other at our Business meetings, our Quarterly Lunch Bunch opportunities to have lunch at various restaurants in the area and our Monthly Book Club. The committee sent Birthday and Condolence cards and chaired the Caring Group. An Ad Hoc Committee put written Mentoring Guidelines in place, which allows our incoming members to receive continuous, consistent mentoring.

Working together, the **Recruitment** and **Retention** Committees co-hosted the fun Patriotic Picnic Mixer at the July Dinner Meeting, the December Holiday Dinner Party, and the Club Birthday Dinner. The combined ‘Add an Altrusan’ and ‘100 year Altrusa Celebration’ Lunch on April 11, was attended by twenty-six Altrusans and guests. Retention and Involvement scored very highly this year.

Members were invited to attend all board meetings this year to learn about the workings of our club leadership.

Goal #4 - Leadership – Provide skills for sustainability and growth

Our Strategic Plan also called for one point person for our Administrative Committees. I appointed Board Director, Ginger Tonne, to be our Administrative Chair. She did a wonderful job keeping the board in tune with what the Administrative committees were doing.

The objective, *Develop leadership skills of Board Members and Committee Members*, was met. The **Leadership Committee** co-chairs, Ginger Tonne and Sarah Nesbitt, led their group in planning leadership training for our Spring joint incoming and outgoing board meeting, planned the program for our June Dinner meeting about Social Media Basics, and held a special leadership event in February with lunch and a speaker on the topic 'Communication with Purpose'.

Ad Hoc committees updated our Club Policies and Procedures, making sure they aligned with the District and International Policies, and developed written board job descriptions and written committee descriptions, all of which were approved this year. They will help us moving forward.

Goal #5 - Financial – Achieve and Maintain Financial solvency

The **Finance Committee**, led by Deb Bourland and Marsha Peters, allocated the money we received the previous fiscal year to finance the service projects for this year. They had to make some cuts due to a limited amount of money, but they distributed it fairly. Your service committees did a wonderful job of doing good with the funds you had. The Finance Committee also allocated the Administrative Money from your dues to create a budget to cover the cost of running our club.

Our **Outstanding Women of Today Fundraiser** chaired by Brenda Duckett and Donna Buhr involved every member of the club. The October event was extremely successful, drawing a crowd of over three hundred people and raising over \$32,000.00 for us to use for service next

year. Putting on an event of this size is a lot of work and it is truly a group effort. It lets our community know who we are and what we do. It also provides companies in our area to honor professional women in their workforce as well as to support our community service.

Our **Foundation Board**, which runs the Service portion of our budget, worked very hard this year to meet IRS guidelines and to promptly provide checks to pay for our giving or reimbursed you for service supplies you purchased. Members were invited to attend all of the Trustee meetings to make them better aware of the workings of this board.

I am especially pleased so many members stepped up to lead. Leadership was part of this year's theme. Please stand when I mention a job you held this year and remain standing. Thirty-seven of you served as either a club board member, a foundation trustee, a committee chair or a co-chair. Let's give them a hand. You may be seated. Almost every committee had two chairs, which distributed the work and developed new leaders.

You participated in International's 100-4-100 Challenges. For "Each Member Give 100 Pennies", you donated \$116.00. For "Give 100 books to People in your Community", you donated 3,645 books. For "Give 100 or more Hours of Service", thirty-six of you did so, and of those two members exceeded 2,000 hours and four others reported over 1,000 hours. For the District, "Add 100 New Members" challenge, you did your part by recruiting and initiating sixteen new members. Richardson Altrusans, you always come through!

I also want to thank Pam Johnson for making Friends Place Adult Day Services our 'Home Away from Home'. We even had a key to her business, and were able to use the facility for committee and board meetings throughout the year. Let's give Pam a hand for her generosity.

I want to add a few more "thank yous" before I end my term and pass the gavel to Sue. A very, very special thank you to my husband, Tom, for making sure I had the time I needed to do this job by taking on almost every house-hold task, and putting things that needed my attention

and trips you hoped to take on hold, until the end of the fiscal year. A special thanks to Mary Beth McLemore for her words of wisdom when I needed them, and working within my schedule to help me this year. And a thank you to my daughter, Jenn Rohm, for putting up with many distracted phone calls between you and me this year.

Again, thank you Altrusans for allowing me to be your President this year. You have so many varied talents; I enjoyed getting to know each one of you better. My advice to each one of you moving forward is: ***Keep doin' what you've been doin' – you are AMAZING!***

Thank you for “Celebrating” this year with me.

Nancy Rohm, President 2016-2017