

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

December is here and a reminder that our Program Year 2011-2012 is one half over!

It's time to review what we have accomplished so far this year and what our goals are for the remainder of this year. It's a good time to take stock and call a meeting of your Committee and take a look at what needs to be done.

Everyone is busy with planning for the Holidays.....shopping, wrapping gifts, baking, making travel plans or maybe just sitting back and enjoying the excitement that seems to be in the air.

Let's all take time this Holiday Season to be thankful for our many blessings and remember our Altrusa Members who are not able to attend meetings on a regular basis. Happy Holidays to you and yours.

Marge Breitbach, President
Altrusa International, Inc. of Battle Creek



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POINSETTIA SALE

Chair of the poinsettia sale, Leslie, reports that the plants were picked up by Lynne and Marge on December 15 (thank you, thank you!) and brought back to Changes so she could get the orders organized. We used Bovens this year as Wenke no longer does poinsettias. Thank you to all who contributed. We netted about \$420, and still have checks to come in. The Club appreciates all who purchased. Thanks to everyone from Leslie!

REBRANDING ALTRUSA

On November 19, Marge and Jane participated in a teleconference with Altrusans from across District 5 to learn about the newly implemented brand strategy for the international organization. The conference was organized by Jill Draper and was most interesting and efficiently presented.

Jill explained that the rebranding effort was developed as a response to the main question that Altrusans routinely field, “What is Altrusa?” The rebranding effort is an attempt to give members a consistent way to answer that question, so that any Altrusan asked to define the organization can do so in the same way.

The new and trademarked Altrusa logo is meant to visually represent the attributes of our organization itself... clarity, flexibility, and inclusion. Shown at the top of this newsletter, that logo also incorporates our new slogan, “Leading to a Better Community.” It is meant to be an “active in the present, with an eye to the future” statement, symbolizing the spirit in our clubs. All websites, newsletters, and other publications are now required to use this logo, although we may continue to use our pins with the globe printed on them because that symbol will remain the emblem of the organization.

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

On Wednesday, December 14, Battle Creek Altrusans and a few of their spouses met at the Battle Creek Country Club for dinner and a celebration of the holiday season. A special thank you to Frankie Fagan for making the arrangements and for providing us with appetizers and the room. The meal was delicious (as always) and the fellowship was even better.

We missed all of our members who were not able to attend, but especially Ellen Ensign and Ruth Horn, whose illnesses have made it difficult for them to get out. We all smiled, though, when we learned that Ruth who is currently living at the Calhoun Medical Care facility won a prize at their fall Halloween party because she came dressed as a “Skittle.” Good job, Ruth!

For those members who weren’t able to attend the party and who couldn’t get their hugs in person, we still send you our best holiday wishes and hope that your season is warm and wonderful.

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AUTUMN SERVICE PROJECTS

Battle Creek Altrusans never sit still. In addition to aiding our ongoing service project, the child care center, this fall we served our community through participation in “Make a Difference Day” on October 22, when we went to the Ann J. Kellogg School to help at the elementary school library under the direction of Judy Montych. We helped the librarian catalog books and make them available for students to check out in order to help the students with their reading and to improve their literacy skills. We are continuing that project with members going to the library when time is available to continue this work.

Throughout the fall, members have also continued making pillows for use at the local dialysis centers to contribute to the comfort of patients undergoing that treatment. That project is overseen by Marge Breitbach.

On December 3, many Altrusans rang bells at the Columbia Avenue Walgreen’s store to help the Salvation Army raise money for people in need in the community. (A special thank you to Dave and Beverly Simpson who gave us hand-warmers to keep us warm while we did that!) Ringing those bells has a special way of warming our hearts as we experience first-hand the generosity of those who drop what they can into the kettles.

And on December 13, Marge, Lynne, Jim, Bobbie, Easter, and Jane helped the Battle Creek Community Foundation serve food and clean up at their annual Holiday gathering. It is always a very nice affair and one which we enjoy because we meet so many people we know and have a chance to increase the visibility of Altrusa in the community. We are also very grateful for the donation that the Foundation makes to our club in thanks for our assistance.

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FROM THE NURSERY

Things are going well at the Child Care and Early Learning Center. In addition to our daily business, we continue in our efforts to work toward national certification for the center. We have presented two additional grant proposals to the United Way, asking for financial assistance for our staff to receive additional child development training and for our families who cannot afford the co-payment for child care. We expect to hear if we have been funded for those projects early next year. The club has given the nursery an additional \$300 to provide gift cards for the staff in recognition of the holiday season.

Just in case you ever wondered why we are so devoted to our mission at the Nursery of providing quality child care to families who are working hard to improve their lives, take a look at Marian’s photos on the last page of this newsletter, which were taken when our children trick or treated at NorthPointe Woods just before Hallowe’en. Have you ever seen such a cute and well-behaved group of children anywhere else? Or such joy on the faces of the adults with them? This makes what we do worth every challenge we surmount.

Hallowe'en 2011 -
Altrusa students trick or treating
at Northpointe Woods



The residents got ready...



For the visit of little goblins...



The children got ready...



Tricking and treating along the hallways



Many beautiful princesses...



Hallowe'en stories enjoyed by all.



Thank you, Red Hat club! Goodbye for now.