

# THE LINK

## Meredith Altrusa 2020 Newsletter



Dear Altrusa Friends:

From April 2020 continuing on into 2021, our club, as many others (like the entire world), learned to deal with rescheduling and delays that often turned into cancellations. Business and committee meetings became an immediate challenge. Innovative solutions included conference calls or meetings in outdoor locations wearing masks and practicing social distancing as weather permitted. Zoom meetings early on were met with some trepidation. Gradually, as time marches on, more of the membership have been willing to participate in Zoom. The rest continue to keep up to date via meeting minutes distributed as usual by email.

Plans for our 25th Festival of Trees in December certainly gave the membership pause for concern, but not for long. Soon emails were flying back and forth proposing creative and alternative ideas, discussing hesitations with positive attitudes and a willingness to pursue solutions to solidify a plan. The success of our 2020 Virtual Festival was due in part to the technical help of an 8th grade computer "whiz kid" and all around delightful young man who set up and monitored our online slideshow of magical trees from years past. His assistance with the "Gift Basket" and "Giving Tree" section of our Festival web page gave us a sense of security. Ultimately, our objective of encouraging the community to support us in giving back during our 25th celebration, and their generous response allowed us to donate \$4,277 to three local non-profits by returning all donations sent in during the slideshow as well as all of our "donation match" dollars. Our Festival website page also invited community members to seek out two "Giving Trees" decorated by Altrusa members and displayed at local supermarkets. Visitors to each were able to select an ornament of their choice and follow the instructions on the back of where to send or hand deliver a particular donation or food item. We received many heartwarming email messages from visitors to the "Giving Trees". They were intrigued by the idea and thanked Altrusa for the incentive to give which in turn got them into the holiday spirit!

The first eight months of this Altrusa year have been nothing short of incredible with the satisfaction surrounding the Virtual Festival of Trees as well as the consistent commitment demonstrated by our committee members in Community Service and Literacy as they continue with the planning and provision of hands-on service throughout our communities. The Scholarship Committee will soon begin setting their dates/deadlines as well as their communication strategy to reach as many applicants as possible for our annual non-traditional scholarship awards program.

COVID, which I prefer to think of as an acronym for Creativity, Opportunity, Versatility, Incentivization and Determination, truly describes not only how our club has risen to the challenge created by this pandemic but also describes all of the club members and officers I have had the pleasure to interact with in District One. Here's to 2021-22!

In Altrusa Friendship,  
Sylvia Detscher, President  
Altrusa International Club of Meredith, N.H., Inc.

## OUR SISTER HELEN ROBINSON

November 6, 1930 - January 13, 2020

Helen joined Meredith Altrusa in October 1989. She was a friend, a mentor, and an inspiration to anyone who met her. Helen was involved with many causes throughout her life and gave her time and talent to all of them.

Her intelligence, grace, leadership, compassion, sense of humor and her never ending curiosity are just a few of the reasons it was a joy to be around her.

Helen had a strong belief that because of all the technology in our world today, we are losing the art of communicating with one another ... eye to eye.

She was a joy to all who knew her, and that is why so many have remarked:



**" I want to be Helen when I grow up"**

## **The Altrusa Club of Meredith**

On January 21, 2020, Members enjoyed the monthly dinner meeting at the Mug in Center Harbor. This month the dinner was casual and everyone ordered their favorite foods off the menu. A great time was had by all. Wine seemed to be a favorite among the ladies.



## Community Dinners

On January 22, 2020, the Meredith Altrusa Community Dinner provided a meal that included a pear salad, rolls, beef stew and a chocolate brownie with ice cream. Pictured below with Altrusa members Sylvia, Paula, Laurie and Judy, were two surprise volunteers Ashley and her daughter Anika. Thanks so much for the extra hands!





## **Maxfield Real Estate Agents Donate to Meredith Altrusa Club**



This year, the Meredith Altrusa Club was very fortunate to have been selected as a recipient of the “Maxfield We Care” Program by Maxfield Agents Lisa Merrill and Annie Stanford. The “Maxfield We Care” Program was created as a way for its agents to support various non-profits within the communities they serve. The Club is very grateful to receive a generous Maxfield We Care donation.

## Valentine's Day

The Community Services Committee from the Altrusa Club of Meredith, NH, got together on February 11th where they prepared Valentine Day cards and a bowl of sweets for the Goldenview Assisted Living residents to add to their enjoyment on this Valentine's Day.



## National Muffin Day

On Monday, March 2nd, in honor of National Muffin Day, the Altrusa Club of Meredith baked and delivered over 25 dozen muffins to homeless shelters and treatment facilities. They were eagerly received by all. Community Service in action!!



## **"BE OUR GUEST" SERVING MEALS FOR THOSE IN NEED.**

On Thursday, May 28th, nine members of the Altrusa Club of Meredith, NH, volunteered to help dispense packaged meals for the BE OUR GUEST service initiative providing free meals for those in need! The partnership of Realtor Chris Kelly and the Ellacoya Bar and Grill restaurant provides and prepares the meals and local charity organization members help to pass them out curbside to those in need. The drive thru, curbside pick-up meals are provided FREE every Thursday from 4 to 6 pm at the Meredith Community Center.





## Face Mask Project

Considering the shortage of masks that had been cited by the medical community, the Altrusa Club of Meredith decided this was something we could help with to ease the shortage. We have made and distributed over 640 masks to many non-profits in the Lakes Region.



## Blood Drive

Meredith Altrusa Community Service Chairs, Kathy LaPoint and Nancy Law, spearheaded one of the most successful Red Cross Blood Drives to date. On August 12th, 43 units were collected and we passed our goal by 5%. Club members assisted with distribution of posters, providing snacks, working registration and the canteen and also by donating blood. Shown below is Pat McFarlin donating blood. Congratulations to all for a great volunteer effort!!!



## Farm to Table

Altrusa members are preparing to box up fresh produce donated by John Moulton of Moulton Farms. During the summer months, members volunteer each week delivering these boxes to local food pantries and other non - profit organizations.





### **Charlotte A. Leavitt Volunteer Award**

Congratulations to Meredith Altrusa President Sylvia Detscher, this year's winner of the Charlotte A. Leavitt Volunteer Award which was established in 2014 by Inter-Lakes Community Caregivers, Inc., Co-Founder Charlotte A. Leavitt. This honor recognizes outstanding fulfillment of the mission of ICCI, a non-profit organization that provides rides and other services to assist neighbors in need who live in the NH towns of Meredith, Center Harbor, Moultonborough and Sandwich .





## **2020-2022 BOARD MEMBERS**

Left to right: 1yr. Director Janine Schifino; 1st Vice President MaryAnne Skawinski; President Sylvia Detscher; 2nd Vice President Linda French; 2yr Director Connie Van Dam; Treasurer Cindy Day; Secretary Wanda Henderson.

1st row left to right: 2yr Director Paula Trombi; Immediate Past President Kathy LaPoint.



## **Back Packs and Supplies**

Nancy Law and Kathy LaPoint, members of The Altrusa Club of Meredith's Community Service, assemble backpacks with supplies that were delivered to the ILHS for the beginning of the school year. The backpacks were distributed by the school nurse, Jodi Pendexter, as needed.

Gift cards were also donated to the elementary school for needed footwear by Nurse Teresa McCormick.



## New Members

On Tuesday September 29, 2020, the Altrusa Club of Meredith, NH, inducted two new members.

Nancy Law is welcoming Jacki Taylor in the first photo and Vivien Mitchell in the second photo.

Congratulations !!!





## Make a Difference Day

Altrusa International recently donated items to the Belknap House in Laconia in honor of Make a Difference Day 2020 on October 24th.

Belknap House in Laconia is a community coalition helping families in need. Their mission is to provide those families a safe shelter when children are particularly at risk during homelessness and to empower the families to become self-sufficient.

Items were collected at Edward Jones Financials in Meredith where Club member Jackie Taylor generously opened her office for dropoffs.





## **New Beginnings Shelter**

The Altrusa Club of Meredith, NH, headed by the Community Service Committee, gathered a wide range of items including scarves, mittens, nail and hair products and donated them in decorative shower caddies to the residents of the New Beginnings Shelter in Laconia. Hopefully, this small gesture will brighten the lives of those impacted by abuse and who are spending a difficult time of year in a shelter, but where, thankfully, they are safe.

The photo below shows Vivien Mitchell and Kathy LaPoint, members of the Community Service Committee.



## TOYS for TOTS

Meredith Altrusa member, Kerry Ann Raymond, collected over 45 toys personally donated by her sister Altrusans for the "TOYS for TOTS" program. This has been an annual tradition during our November "Thanks for Giving" dinner meeting, which did not happen this year due to Covid. Not to worry, our members are very resourceful, helping their sister Altrusans who could not venture out for a leisure day of shopping. Many appreciated help from local shops who accepted phone orders, and pick up, rather than relying on in store browsing. This was truly a team effort!!



## **"Laying of the Wreaths"**

On Saturday, December 5th, members of the Altrusa Club of Meredith NH, participated in the "Laying of the Wreaths" Ceremony at the NH Veterans Cemetery in Boscaawen.

This initiative, the laying of the wreaths via Wreaths across America, is a truly a heart-warming way to remember those who have served our country.





## " DECKING THE HALLS"

Leslie Sturgeon, the new Executive Director of the Meredith Chamber of Commerce, invited the Altrusa Club of Meredith to decorate the Chamber porch.





## 25th Anniversary of Festival of Trees



## Favorite Trees from the Past

2020 Festival of Trees was challenging. Because of social distancing a Virtual online slide show of 24 beautiful trees from past festivals were displayed. Three trees representing three local non-profit organizations were selected. Participants were asked to vote for their favorite tree and make a donation.

From left to right: The Grinch Tree, White Christmas Tree, and the Angel Tree.



## Giving Trees

Giving trees were displayed at both EM Heath's in Center Harbor and Hannaford's in Meredith. Helping those in need, each person was asked to select an ornament and make a donation to the organization that was most meaningful to them.





## " Virtual Festival of Trees Amazing Gift Baskets"

Enter to win!!! There were five baskets to choose from. Members of the public were asked to purchase tickets to win a fabulous gift basket





## **Meredith Altrusa's Virtual "Charity Trees" Fundraiser is a Huge Success**

Standing L-R: Inter-Lakes Elementary School Principal Michael Bryant; Altrusa "Charity Trees" Co-Chair Marie Stephens; Altrusa President Sylvia Detscher; ILES Reading Specialist Title 1 Project Manager Alesia Parks (Inter-Lakes Christmas Fund) and Dawn Longval, Director and Founder of Isaiah 61 Cafe.

Seated L-R: Ashley Suckling and Liza Epstein, ILES K-12 PTO.

Because of Covid-19 restrictions, Meredith Altrusa's 25th Annual Festival of Trees was held virtually, and thanks to the public's support and generosity, the following non-profit organizations benefited: Inter-Lakes Christmas Fund, Inter-Lakes K-12 PTO and Isaiah 61 Cafe.



## Festival of Trees Tech GURU

Pictured in the middle between Communications Committee Co-Chairs Paula Trombi and Janine Schifino is our web site technical GURU Sumner Mills. Sumner is an 8th grade student at Inter-Lakes Middle/ High School. He made it possible for us to continue our annual fundraiser and 25th Anniversary Festival of Trees virtually. We thank him for his technical skills and patience.

This young man is just 13 years old and has started his own business: [bayshoreenterprise.com](http://bayshoreenterprise.com). Some of his clients have included Moulton's Farm and Sal's Fresh Seafood.



Looking forward to a great Spring Season

