

District Service Bulletin

MICHIGAN AND OHIO



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Governor Shelley's Letter

Membership can mean many things but at its heart, it's about belonging-to a group, or organization, or a shared purpose.

Altrusa membership offers a unique blend of service, leadership development, and meaningful connection with like-minded individuals committed to community betterment. Think of your Altrusa journey - how have you grown? Whether leading a project, chairing a committee or serving as an officer, every role offers a chance to build new skills.

You may be asked to speak publicly. Many of us are uncomfortable speaking in front of others, but when you are sharing something you care deeply about, it's much easier.

And in today's digital world, we are all faced with learning new technologies. Maybe you hesitated to use a new computer program – only to discover you could master it.

Altrusa is a diverse, worldwide community which brings together different talents, and each member grows by serving in different capacities.

Service not only benefits others-it enriches our own lives.

Shelley



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Calling all Experts!

Are you skilled at any of the below platforms?

- WordPress
- Canva
- Website Building

Please email McKenzie Dinger at
mthemaltrusa@gmail.com for more info.

Check us out on:

Facebook: Altrusa District Five

YouTube: @altrusadistrictfive (Subscribe)

District Website: <http://districtfive.altrusa.org>

Important Dates:

December 10	Human Rights Day
January 04	World Braille Day
January 24	International Day of Education
February 11	International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Awards:

It's that time of year!!! Holiday gatherings and list making seem to take priority as we pass from Summer/Fall right into Winter. But it is also time to start planning for awards and which of your projects you would like to submit for an award. All this Planning points toward the announcement of winners at the District Five Conference in April.

Soon all club Presidents will receive the Awards Description and Awards Chart documents from me and International will send them out to all members. Please review the award information and when submitting an award, follow the criteria carefully. Proofread and have someone else proofread each submission. Two of the International awards will be sent to me and one to Co-Chair Germaine. Club sponsored awards should be submitted to those listed on the Awards Chart. Please refer to the Awards Description and the Awards Chart, as there have been some changes since last year.

We all enjoy and learn from knowing the diverse projects in our clubs. No matter how large or small the project is, you are making a difference in your community. So, take the time and share them with all of us through your award submission.

Award submission deadline is February 1, 2026. Make sure you mail your submissions on time and consider our postal system. If it is close to the submission deadline you may want to consider overnight mail. All entries must be **Postmarked by February 1, 2026.**

If you have any questions, please contact Sandra Ehrlich, District Five Awards Co-Chair at sehrlich@woh.rr.com.

Submitted by Sandra Ehrlich, Service and Awards Co-Chair

Mid-Year Report:

District Five's Mid-Year meeting brought together the District Five Board for a productive weekend of planning and collaboration. District business is conducted and the first steps in planning our annual Conference are on the agenda. Our goal for Conference is to provide education, sharing, fellowship and also fun. I hope we don't disappoint!

Mark your Calendars

What: District Five Conference

When: April 24 – 25, 2026

Where: Howard Johnson, Lima. Ohio

Host: Marion Altrusa

We hope we see you there. Stay tuned for more information!

It's Back! Tri-Fold Competition

We are asking all of you to put together your creative juices for another Tri-Fold competition. What is different this year is the theme for the competition, "Fundraisers" specifically for your operating budgets. The tri-folds will be posted in the Lobby. Judging will be conducted by our International representative and a member of the hotel staff.

We need you to:

- Bring your tri-folds by 5 pm the Friday of Conference.
- Be prepared to pick them up after 9:30 am on Sunday

Judging will be based on the following:

- Originality/Creativity
- Lay Out
- Clarity
- Materials
- Visual Appeal

Plus, for all of your work, first place will receive \$50 and second \$25.

This is a great opportunity to share and give new ideas to other clubs, Let's work together to make fundraising even more successful for every club!

Conference 2026:

CONFERENCE 2026 IN LIMA

The District Five Annual Conference will be held in Lima – a more central location for our clubs. We have had two conferences there before and the hotel is a great venue for our Conference. Have you heard of the famous Marion Popcorn Festival? Well, lucky District Five – we will be Poppin’ Down the Altrusa Trail with our Host Club, Marion, and they promised popcorn, plus a surprise guest who has a reputation....can’t say more, but it will be an interesting historical journey.

We have some great things planned for this Conference. Here are some of the highlights:

- Kitty McElhaney, International President-Elect will be our representative
- Sleeping room rates are only \$105 per night
- Included in your registration is dinner on Friday night
- Learn about Club 52

Submitted by Tammy Bader, Conference Manager

POPPIN’ DOWN THE ALTRUSA TRAIL

The Altrusa Club of Marion, Ohio and Altrusa District Five are excited to invite you to join us April 24-26, 2025 for the 71st Altrusa District Five Conference. Come ready to learn, share ideas from your club, and reconnect with your friends from Ohio and Michigan.

What to expect:

- Friday Afternoon Round table conversations with topics of Group Tally, New Communications Apps, Canva, AI, Membership, ASTRA
- An All Member Session with a sweet surprise.
- The Annual Awards Ceremony
- Interactive Workshops
- Vendor Tables, Live Auction Items, the Altrusa Store
- Tri Fold Contest featuring Fundraisers

Submitted by Connor Teters, Program Coordinator

Dress for Success: Help Us Empower Marion’s Students!

Dress for Success is a partnership between the Marion club and Kohl’s, to dress approximately 23 local students giving them the confidence and resources they need for their first day of school. These students, ranging from elementary to high school, are selected by the Boys & Girls Club of Marion and will receive a \$125 budget for new clothes and essentials. On the first Thursday of August - Ohio’s tax-free day - club members will accompany students on a special shopping trip. Each student is also provided with a backpack loaded with school supplies and a free book.

What can you do to help? We are asking for basic school supplies for the backpacks.

More details will follow as to what items we consider as basic school supplies.

Bylaws:

ATTENTION: Your Club Bylaws Need Updated

At the Altrusa International Convention in Quebec this past summer, changes in local club bylaws were proposed and approved. The changes that need to be made are in the definition of membership where Young Adult is added to the bylaws. Previously it was only in the policies.

In the Club bylaws under Article IV, a new Section 3 is added to read:

Section 3. Young Adult Members

Young Adult members are those Active members who are age 30 and younger and are eligible for a 50% reduction in international dues from the regular rate. Any member not willing to document their date of birth will be charged the full regular rate.

The current Section 3 - Emeritus Members - becomes Section 4. The current Section 4 - Honorary Members - becomes Section 5.

The updated Club Bylaws template can be found on the International website (altrusa.org) under the Governance tab. You will need to add your specific club information in the document in four (4) places.

Article I Name, Section 1 Name - add your club name.

Article VII Meetings of Members, Section 2 Regular – add when your club meetings are held.

Article VIII Board of Directors, Section 1 Composition – add number of number of Directors on your club Board.

Article VIII Board of Directors, Section 2 Tenure – add number of Directors elected in even-numbered years and number elected in odd-numbered years.

The change to each Club's Bylaws needs to be updated ASAP. As the District Chair for Bylaws, Recommendations and Resolutions, I am responsible for tracking that all clubs have updated their bylaws. Presidents, please email me at lwilliamsaltrusa@gmail.com when your club bylaws are updated. Contact me with any questions.

Submitted by Linda Williams, Governor-Elect
Chair, Bylaws, Recommendations and Resolutions (BRR)

Foundation:

Annual Conference Support for the Altrusa International Foundation

One of the core missions of our annual conference is to provide meaningful support to the Altrusa International Foundation. A primary way we accomplish this is through the Conference Raffle.

Each club will be asked to contribute a raffle item for the Conference Raffle. Members who wish to provide an item are warmly welcomed to do so; these donations will also be accepted in support of our cause.

Raffle tickets are available for purchase during the Conference. For those who would like to support the International Foundation but are unable to attend in person, tickets are also made accessible remotely. In early February, club presidents will receive a signup sheet intended to be shared at club meetings, allowing members interested in participating to sign up for raffle tickets.

Each sheet of raffle tickets is priced at \$20.00, providing 25 chances to win. Additionally, purchasers of raffle sheets are entered for a special door prize, further enhancing the excitement and opportunity to contribute.

Club 52:

Evolution and Impact of Club 52

Club 52, originally known as Club 21, was established with the mission to support camps for children living with HIV/AIDS. Over the past 30 years, this initiative has transformed into a vibrant tradition of service, expanding its reach and deepening its impact. Today, under the banner of Club 52, the organization not only continues its commitment to children's camps for those living with disabilities and serious illnesses but also extends support to international healthcare and educational projects that make a difference worldwide.

As Club 52 has grown, so has the need for resources to sustain and enhance its efforts. While the original \$21 donation that launched the program in 1997 would be nearly \$50 today, Club 52 has adapted to these changes by offering a straightforward and sustainable giving model. Individuals can contribute \$1 per week for 52 weeks, amounting to a one-time gift of \$52 each fiscal year. For clubs and districts, the recommended annual contribution is \$252, enabling Altrusans to unite and amplify their collective impact.

At the 59th International Convention in Québec City, 274 Altrusans became Charter Members of Club 52, marking the beginning of a new era defined by generosity and commitment. By choosing to join Club 52, members help ensure that children and families—both locally and globally—continue to receive essential care, opportunities, and hope for a better future.

Submitted by Kathy Ballman-Parks, Vice Governor, Foundation Liaison

Leadership:

Leadership is about serving others.

Did you know that the one line of the Altrusa logo that extends upward and beyond the rest represents the leadership development inherent in Altrusa membership. Each of us brings skills, gifts, talents and differing levels of energy to our clubs. The beauty is that each of us can watch our own unique personal leadership story unfold as we participate in Altrusa activities. ALL of us are leaders.

But how can we strengthen Altrusa leadership within our clubs?

- Welcome new members and get them involved in projects
- Give everyone a voice at the meetings to share concerns, ideas and successes. Listen, support and encourage members.
- Offer an orientation for new members, but don't forget about re-orienting old-timers
- Build excitement and energy with productive meetings balancing business and fun.
- Educate members through 2-3 minute Altrusa Accents.
- Develop an active committee structure with Chairs and assign "more seasoned" mentors as role models to help guide and educate.
- Define goals and direction in your club strategic plan.
- Initiate succession planning to ensure effective preparation of people for leadership positions.
- Gain knowledge. Read the DSB (District Service Bulletin), "like" the District Five Facebook page, view the International website, and attend District webinars and conference.
- Feel proud of what you do and the value you bring to the community and your club.

Altrusans are flexible. Just as we embrace new community service projects due to changing needs, we also need to embrace changes within our clubs to achieve member retention and recruitment, growth and officer leadership. **Are you using all of your skills, gifts and energies to support Altrusa?**

Submitted by Linda Williams, Governor-Elect

Membership:

This Fall is a great time to discuss ways to revitalize your club. Here are a few suggestions.

- Conduct an ice breaker before a business meeting that focuses on members getting to know each other. There are lots of ice breaker activities online. Just Google "ice breakers for business meetings".
- Form a social committee to plan activities that are fun, relaxing and low cost. Meet at a local park to walk and/or to chat while enjoying a sack lunch. Meet at a local winery for wine-tasting or dinner. Tour a local museum or visit an animal sanctuary. You may want to invite guests so that they can meet club members in a casual setting.
- Assign a greeter for each business meeting to welcome each member at the door and hand out name tags. Especially for new members, this small gesture can make them feel included and relaxed.

By implementing these activities, members will engage with other members which may lead them to become active members.

Submitted by Pat Skornicka, Membership/Revitalization Chair

Nominating Committee:



BIOGRAPHICAL FORM

This form should accompany the signed job description for District Five office.

Name: Sally J. Gesouras

Year Joined Altrusa: 2013

District Offices Held (with time in Office): n/a

Club Offices Held (with time in office): Board member 2018; VP 2019-20 President 2020-2022
Co President; VP of Foundation (Altrusa International of Mansfield Ohio Foundation) current 2025

District Committee Chairs Held: none

Club Committee Chairs Held: Grants Committee

Other Altrusa Responsibilities: Help with grants; have helped with obtaining speakers at business meetings

Conferences Attended (number only): 3 **Conventions Attended (number only):** n/a

Any Other Comment/Information: Thoroughly enjoy Altrusa, giving back to my community and developing friendships along the way.



BIOGRAPHICAL FORM

This form should accompany the signed job description for District Five office.

Name: Susan H. Sanders

Year joined Altrusa: 2015

District Offices Held (with time in Office): None

Club Offices Held (with time in office): Director - 2018-2022; President-Elect - 2022-2024; President - 2024-2026

District Committee Chairs Held: None

Club Committee Chairs Held: Program Committee

Other Altrusa Responsibilities: Served on Membership Committee and Auction Committee

Conferences Attended (number only): 6 **Conventions Attended (number only):** 1

Any Other Comment/Information:



BIOGRAPHICAL FORM

This form should accompany the signed job description for District Five office.

Name: Sharmon S Lesnak

Year Joined Altrusa: 2003

District Offices Held (with time in Office): Director II 2021-2023

Club Offices Held (with time in office): Treasurer 2005-2007, Treasurer 2007-2009, President- Elect 2015. President 2016 – 2018 (Immediate Past President 2018-2020) and Co-President 2020 – 2022 (Immediate Past President 2022-2024)

District Committee Chairs Held: none at this time

Club Committee Chairs Held: Finance Committee Chair, Service Committee Chair, Host Club Committee Chair 2020 (2022) District Five Conference

Other Altrusa Responsibilities: Lead for Altrusa/Kim Cunningham-Tiberio Scholarship Fund for Respiratory Care Students at YSU, Altrusa Volunteer at Fellows Riverside Gardens Holiday Tree, mentoring fellow Altrusa members and assisting wherever I'm needed.

Conferences Attended (number only): 13 **Conventions Attended (number only):** 1

Any Other Comment/Information: During my years of service I've learned so much from every Altrusan I've met. My term on District Five Board broadened my understanding of everything Altrusa does/gives to our communities, country and internationally. Each of you are amazing

Memorial Form:



Memorial Form

Your help is needed to ensure the Memorial Service portion of the District Five Conference is as meaningful and informative as possible.

Please complete this form and send it either by email or mail, along with a photo, for Altrusans in your club who have passed away since the last conference. All memorial forms must be submitted by March 21, 2026

Submit to Shelley Kendrick
Email: skendrickaltrusa@gmail.com

Name of Club:

Name of Deceased Member:

Age:

Member of Altrusa since (approximate if unsure):

Contributions to Altrusa and this club include (attach page if needed):

Please include a picture if possible.

Person submitting this form:

Name:

Position in club:

Address:

Telephone:

Email address:

Name of Member to participate in Memorial Service if known:

Club News:

Columbus: Altrusa Columbus had a very informative presentation from Cristina Villarreal, President of the Buckeye Military Moms Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., Ohio Chapter 9. She gave a short history of the formation of the Blue Star Mothers and explained the goals and activities of her local chapter. Cristina also gave personal anecdotes as a mother of a serviceman. Columbus Altrusans took cards home to write messages of support to active-duty service members and returned the completed cards at our November meeting along with some donated mugs for the Buckeye Military Moms to include in their care packages. The “Moms” decorate the mugs and fill them with treats. At the invitation of Cristina Villarreal, Altrusans Nancy Metzger, Mary Smithson, Bonnie Ackerman, and Barbara Simons attended a special reception at the Buckeye Military Moms monthly meeting, to honor their member’s election as National President of the Blue Star Mothers of America. We hope to have an opportunity to join forces with the Buckeye Military Moms for something special.



Highland County:

Congrats on a successful quarter raffle!



Bucyrus: Hosted their annual purse bingo. A great time was had by all!



Marion: Congrats on a successful purse bingo!



Chillicothe: Hosted an outstanding bazaar!