

District Service Bulletin

MICHIGAN AND OHIO



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Governor Shelley's Letter

What an exciting time we had at the 71st District Five Conference! Not only was it the largest attendance since COVID, but we were thrilled to have all 19 clubs represented. We laughed together, and we cried together, and we even welcomed a surprise “appearance” from Mamie L. Bass herself, a moment that blended history, humor, and heart in true Altrusa fashion.

A big thank you to the Marion club for their hard work. Our host clubs never disappoint, and this year was no exception. We certainly had a “Poppin’ Good Time!”

Congratulations to the clubs who won awards and sincere thanks to every club that submitted entries. Your work reflects the spirit of service that defines District Five. And to the clubs who didn’t submit this year-I know you’re doing fantastic projects. I would love to see more of them. Award submissions are a wonderful opportunity to “show off” how you are building better communities. We learn from each other and your ideas inspire others.

My hope for next year is simple: More projects. More shared inspiration.

So mark your calendars now - Howard Johnsons in Lima, April 23-25, 2027. We may have a few surprises in store, but one thing is certain: we always have fun.

Governor 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:

June 05	World Environment Day
July 12	International Day of Hope
July 30	International Day of Friendship
August 12	International Youth Day

2026 District Five Awards:

Congratulations to all the clubs who won at the 71st District Five Conference held in Lima, Ohio this year.

Thank you for all of your work this past year and for submitting entries.

Winners of the International Awards:

- **Mamie L. Bass Award Service Award** was presented to Altrusa International of Hamilton for their “**Hope for Children**” project
- **Lucille Pence Service Award**, The Second-Place winner in the Mamie L. Bass Competition went to Altrusa International of Highland County for their “**Soup to Nuts**” project
- **Letha H. Brown Literacy Award** was presented to Altrusa International of Dayton for their “**The Great Altrusan Book Rescue**” project
- **Dorothy Spayth Literacy Award**, the second place Letha H. Brown Award was given to Altrusa International of Branch County for their “**Storywalk**” project
- **Dr Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award** was given to Altrusa International of Youngstown for their “**Pillowcase Dresses for Liberia**” project.
- **Battle Creek International Relations Award** the second place Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award went to Altrusa International of Troy for their “**Service Without Borders: Restoring Mobility, Dignity, and Hope for Honduras**”
- **International ASTRA Club Service Award** was presented to Coldwater High School for their “**Gowns for Gals-Ties for Guys**” Coldwater High School is sponsored by Altrusa International of Branch County

Winners of Club Sponsored Awards:

- **New Club Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Bucyrus- there was no new club this year
- **Claudia J. Speakman ASTRA Service Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Branch County was presented to Coldwater High School
- **Paula Reese Award for Best Newsletter** sponsored by Altrusa International of Akron presented to Altrusa International of Highland County (1st Place), Altrusa International of Branch County (2nd place), Altrusa International of Troy (3rd place)
- **Hamilton Attendance Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Hamilton was presented to Altrusa International of Branch County (First Place with 88.5%), Altrusa International of Highland County (Second Place with (86%) and Altrusa International of Bucyrus (Third Place with 78.29%)
- **Cassie Gamble Long Term Project Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Chillicothe presented to Altrusa International of Dayton
- **Membership Award** sponsored by Altrusa International Washington Court House was presented to Altrusa International of Troy with 33.33% increase. In addition, Altrusa International of Grand Rapids received a certificate for gain of 3 or more members.
- **Elizabeth E. Powelson Career Achievement Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Springfield was presented to Mary Guthrie, Altrusa International of Branch County
- **New Astra Club Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Branch County- no submissions this year.

- **Mary B. Smith Yearbook Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Youngstown presented to Altrusa International of Highland County
- **Troy Conference Registration Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Troy was presented to Altrusa International of Dayton
- **Clara Weisenborn Patriotism Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Dayton was presented to Altrusa International of Highland County
- **Linda Atwell Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Mansfield presented to Deborah Wickman of Altrusa International of Findlay, OH
- **Norma Hiner Club Innovation Award** sponsored by Altrusa International of Mansfield was presented to Altrusa International of Highland County
- **Winner of the Governor's Awards:**
 - **Ann Baird Governor's Award** was presented to Altrusa International of Troy

Submitted by: Sandra Ehrlich, Service/ Awards Co-Chair

Conference Reports:

And that's a wrap.... The 71st Annual District Five Altrusa Conference is in the books. As Program Coordinator, I was responsible for creating the Conference Program that all attendees received. I also was responsible in making sure all sessions, workshops, and other activities ran smoothly. I enjoyed working with the district board in the planning stages for the conference. This position allowed me to get to know each of the board members. This position showed me that we all have strengths and weaknesses, if we work together we can complement each other and make the very best version of ourselves. Let this sink in, be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody. Who else has the days counted for the 2027 conference? Bis nächstes Jahr (See you next year)

Submitted by: Connor Teters, Program Coordinator

LOOKING BACK AT DISTRICT FIVE'S 2026 CONFERENCE FROM THE SECRETARY'S CHAIR

My Conference job starts in February when I get the list of clubs and the number of members that are in each one. Based on those numbers I determine how many Delegates and Alternates each club will have for Conference. I send an individual letter to each President informing them of those numbers and requesting them to fill out the form with those names and email addresses prior to April 1. I compile the list of Delegates and Alternates and send that on to the Credentials Chair for use in setting up voting during Conference. This was the first year of electronic voting and it went well!

When the Board arrived on Thursday, the meetings began. This year there was a lot to cover:

- Granting Emeritus status to a longtime member
- Acceptance of the new form for Club Visits
- Discussion and decision about disbursing the funds from the Conference Store
- Lamplighter designations
- Approval of the Conference Program
- The Reports from the Chairs
- DSB Assignments
- Electronic voting procedure
- Club Visit reports
- Updated Position Descriptions

Friday began the all-member sessions. Workshops were held on Saturday and the Delegates voted on the incoming members and Chair of the Nominating Committee for the 2027 Conference. The Awards Banquet gave winners a time to shine. There were interesting speakers and entertainment and three sessions of the Live Auction.

Sunday brought the Memorial Service and Inspirational; Service. There were the International Awards, then everyone went home, except the Board, which still had a few loose ends to tie up.

Conference is a busy few days for the Secretary, but there is enough free time to make it fun and enough work to make it rewarding.

Submitted by: Peggy Harrison, Secretary

TOGETHER WE POPPED: CONNECTION, LEARNING & LAUGHTER AT THE DISTRICT FIVE CONFERENCE

The 71st District Five Annual Conference, “Poppin’ Along the Altrusa Trail,” hosted by the Marion Altrusa Club, has come and gone, but the memories are still popping.

As conference manager, I was truly impressed by the hotel staff. They worked tirelessly to ensure every detail was ready for us, from the vendor area and ballroom to the store, workshops, and hospitality space. Although we have held conferences at Howard Johnson’s before, we have selected this as our central location for the 2026-2028 conferences. After this year’s experience, this choice feels like a great fit.

Governor Shelley’s theme, *Embrace Change*, showed up in meaningful ways as we introduced online voting and electronic surveys. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. Your Board values your feedback, and the overall responses were very positive.

Friday’s opening session began with Marion Club members presenting the colors, followed by an all-member session on how to take our meetings from boring to soaring. We even explored our personalities through our favorite popcorn flavors! On Saturday, we voted on the new Nominating Committee and enjoyed a reminder that Altrusa is the popcorn bowl, and our members are the “pop” that serves our communities.

Members also learned more about the 2027 International Convention in Columbus, Ohio, along with Altrusa’s involvement in the United Nations. Saturday’s workshops offered something for everyone, including Google, Social Media & Membership, International Service Projects, Inclusion, Life and Leadership Balance, and Simple Service Projects.

The District Live Auction delivered plenty of laughs and more than a little friendly competition. Saturday’s banquet added extra fun with a special visit from Mamie L. Bass and President Taft with his wife, Nellie, who shared a bit of history with us.

Sunday’s memorial service was a heartfelt, solemn time as we honored the many members of our Altrusa family who have passed. It was followed by an uplifting message from our Altrusan sister, Lisa Bradley-Glenn, whose words were both encouraging and enlightening.

Congratulations to all of our award winners! We had several entries for the International Awards and if you didn’t win this time, please try again. Your projects reflect the creativity and commitment of our amazing members.

Hope to see you at the 72nd Annual District Conference in April 2027 hosted by the Bucyrus Altrusa Club!

Submitted by: Tammy Bader, Conference Manager

DISTRICT FIVE CONFERENCE FOUNDATION REPORT

An important part of District Five's mission is to support the Altrusa International Foundation. This is mainly accomplished at our annual Conference through our raffle and silent auction items, Club 52 memberships and other donations.

District Five members and Clubs did not fail in this mission. They were phenomenal with their support. The Club and members donations to the raffle were astounding. The generosity and creativity of these items were remarkable. The response to raffle ticket sales with members who attended and those who could not attend was incredible. In addition to the 17 charter members and 2 club members of Club 52, District Five added 57 new charter members and 3 new Club charter members. District Five also became a charter member of Club 52.

The total amount raised by District Five was **\$9097.36**. It has been customary for District Five to select how we would like this money to be distributed. We designate Lamplighter donations of \$500.00 to our International Representative for Conference and to Clubs celebrating their 100th anniversary in Altrusa, which included Altrusa of Akron and Altrusa of Chillicothe. After the donations for Club 52, the remainder of the money (if not designated by the individual or club) was divided between the Foundation Disaster Relief Programs and Foundation Grants & Scholarships.

District Five Clubs and members should feel satisfied and proud of their efforts to support the Altrusa International Foundation. Well-done, District Five – You rocked it!!!!

Submitted by: Kathy Ballman-Parks, Vice Governor

Conference Photos:



If you love these pictures check out the link below!

Perhaps you will find yourself.

<https://altrusa-district-5.pahlphotographyllc.com>

Thanks to our Photographer extraordinaire – Gwen Pahl



President and Mrs. Taft
with Mamie Bass



Our Host Club, Marion

Chair Updates:

This year, I have published four District Service Bulletins using a newly adopted template that is both user-friendly and easy to read. I collaborated closely with club presidents to stay informed about their activities and ensure their updates were accurately reflected in each bulletin. Special thanks to Michele Haverfield (Tuscarawas County) and Shelley Rush (Marion) who have been instrumental in maintaining the District Facebook page and keeping each club's website content current.

Looking ahead to the coming year, my primary goal is to focus on enhancing the website, with an emphasis on ensuring that every club has a fully updated and engaging page. I have truly enjoyed my experience so far as Communications Chair and look forward to continuing to grow and learn in this role.

Submitted by: McKenzie Dinger, Communications Chair

Over the past several months, I have been actively engaged with several District Five clubs to support their membership growth, orientation, and overall member experience.

I assisted one club currently facing membership challenges. I shared with the President my own club's new member folder. I also worked with another District Five club to continue their member orientation efforts and to explore ways to bring more fun, energy, and connection into their business meetings.

In March, I participated in the International Membership Development Committee meeting via Zoom, joining District Membership Chairs from across the country. Our discussion focused on communication strategies, the challenges we face in our roles, and effective approaches to both recruitment and retention. Since that meeting, I have remained in contact with two other membership chairs to continue sharing ideas and strengthening collaboration across districts.

Submitted by: Pat Skornika, Membership Chair

Leading with Change

Change offers new opportunities for each of us to learn and grow. Change is positive! We each need to recognize our role in helping to influence change that strengthens Altrusa in our clubs, District and worldwide. Embrace change by:

- Taking on a leadership role in your club or District
- Sharing the Altrusa story to recruit members
- Learning to use social media and technology
- Developing new service projects based on changing community needs
- Listening and trying new ideas suggested by members
- Contributing to meetings, service projects and fundraising activities with an active, positive attitude
- Growing, leading, and mentoring others

Will you accept and confirm your part in leading the way to embrace positive growth and change in yourself, your club, your community and in your Altrusa journey?

Submitted by: Linda Williams, Governor-Elect, Chair of District Leadership Committee

An “Educational Moment” from the BRR Chair:

According to the Altrusa Encyclopedia, bylaws are the set of rules an organization adopts for use in governing its own meeting or affairs. Basically bylaws define the structure of an organization, its purpose, how business is conducted, and the duties and responsibilities of those involved. Altrusa has Bylaws at all three levels: International, District and Club.

The template for Club bylaws (in Microsoft Word version) is located on the Altrusa International website under the Governance tab. These bylaws were last revised August 1, 2025. There are several places in the bylaws that need to be filled in to make them specific to your club.

Article I – Name

Section 1: Name - insert the name of your club

Article VII – Meetings of Members

Section 2: Regular – enter the day of the week your club meets each month

Article VIII – Board of Directors

Section 1: Composition – state the number of Directors your club has

Section 2: Tenure – list the number of Directors elected in odd and/or even
Years

Once completed the Bylaws should be approved by the Board and membership.

All Board of Director position descriptions at the District level were reviewed, updated and approved at the Conference Board meeting. The position descriptions for the District Chairs are being reviewed next with a target date of October, 2026 for updates and approval. Any member is welcome to view the position descriptions. Contact the BRR chair for a copy at lwilliamsaltrusa@gmail.com.

Other Board activity related to policies and procedures has included updates to tracking membership numbers, electronic voting, Elections procedures, and a complete overhaul of the Conference Planning Manual.

Submitted by: Linda Williams, Governor-Elect, BRR Chair

Convention 2027:



TOP 10 REASONS TO ATTEND THE 2027 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN COLUMBUS, OHIO – July 21-24, 2027



NUMBER 10: Shop Altrusa-branded items at the on-site Doc Morgan store – pick up member pins, president pens with no shipping costs.



NUMBER 9: Discover fresh service-project ideas you can take back to your Club to better your community.



NUMBER 8: Participate in engaging educational workshops.



NUMBER 7: Support the International Foundation through Raffle donations (Think Ohio/Michigan Theme!)



NUMBER 6: Visit the Columbus Zoo & experience a close up encounter with Zoo animals – might even get to feed a giraffe



NUMBER 5: Be a part of hosting the FIRST International Convention in DISTRICT FIVE in 50 years!!



NUMBER 4: Celebrate what makes DISTRICT FIVE such a great place to serve!



NUMBER 3: Meet the 2027-2029 International Board & connect with Altrusans from around the world



NUMBER 2: Judge Sara Smolenski will be a keynote speaker. For those who attended the Grand Rapids Conference, nothing more needs to be said. For those who missed this – ask a Club member!

And the **NUMBER ONE** reason to attend the Altrusa International Convention: There's no better place to be than with your Altrusa Family in Columbus, Ohio

Club News:



Mansfield Club member and Little Free Library steward, Candy Brenner, won copies of Good Morning America's April book club pick, Yesteryear by Caro Claire Burke to place in the LFLs.

Grand Rapids Altrusans volunteered at the Feast for Kids food pantry.



The Youngstown Club hosted their Spring Fling Fundraiser. Speakers at the event this year were from the Mob Town Podcast. They provided an entertaining history lesson on the mob activity in the Youngstown area.

Columbus, Ohio Altrusans had a busy evening with a potluck dinner followed by a painting session led by a local artist. We asked the artist to lead us in creating a vase of flowers using the Altrusa colors teal, grey, gold and red. The evening was enhanced by welcoming a guest, initiating a new member and installing the slate of officers for the next fiscal year!





CONGRATULATIONS



Membership Incentive Winners!

Kudos to **Highland County** and **Tuscarawas County** for being among the winning clubs in the **New Member Incentive**.

Across International, **98** clubs welcomed a total of **188** new members.

Congratulations to all – Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and commitment to strengthening Altrusa and the communities we serve.

Congratulations to our International Grant Recipients!

Please join me in celebrating the following clubs for receiving **International Foundation Grants**

- **Youngstown** – *Teacher Shower*
- **Tuscarawas County** – *Turning Pages into Possibilities in Tuscarawas County*
- **Highland County** – *Stars, Stripes & Stockings*

I look forward to seeing the impact of their hard work and the difference they will continue to make in their communities.