

2000 - 2009's

2000-2001

When *Carolyn Swanson* became president in May 2000, she stood before the club with her model railroad engine and asked all to join the Altrusa Express. She established the following goals for the year:

1. Initiate eight new members.
2. Increase communication about how the club and foundation function.
3. Enhance one service project.
4. Nurture our ASTRA club.
5. Achieve broad participation of our members in our club and foundation activities.

The club year started with a membership of forty and four new members were added for a ten-percent increase. While the goal was not reached, the new members initiated were very enthusiastic and committed. A couple of new recruiting tools were created, thanks to the efforts of the Communications Committee – a tri-fold brochure about our Club that can be used for recruiting or for soliciting donations and a more detailed set of information in a folder that can be given to prospective members.

President Swanson said that everyone was going to learn how this train operates. The goal was to communicate with each other about how our club and foundation operate, learning why things are done the way they are and understanding our bylaws and policies and procedures. The Board of Directors started with our Articles of Incorporation, and proceeded to review the other documents that define us. They made a number of recommendations for changes, some of which were accepted, others that were not. The Membership Development Committee helped us learn about why we do what we do, when they presented two very well attended Orientations, one of which covered our Bylaws and the Encyclopedia. The other was a presentation put together by the Treasurer *Phyllis Meyerson* that covered everything anyone would ever want to know about our budgeting process.

The third goal involved service. Most of our service projects were the tried-and-true projects that we have found rewarding in past years, so the Service Committee continued our success at City Park Elementary School, the East Dallas Police Storefront, the Dallas County Juvenile Services' Letot Center, and Our Friends Place. We participated in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Walk for the Cure, and had a record-setting year of donations for our TUGS and BUGS challenge. We made Easter Baskets for hospitalized children, and stuffed socks full of treats for the teenagers at the Letot Center. We again sponsored the SPCA's "Link Seminar," a forum for exploring the link between animal cruelty and human violence and helping to build a community response to these interconnected issues.

We certainly met our goal of nurturing our ASTRA Club at Marsh Middle School, as evidenced by the more than twenty ASTRA guests at a February meeting. We investigated the feasibility of starting a second ASTRA club with high school students. For that project to continue, it needs an involved faculty coordinator to encourage and support an ASTRA Club at W. T. White High School.

The goal that was most important to President Swanson was that we achieve broad participation of our members in our club and foundation activities – whether that meant presenting an Accent, bringing guests to our fundraiser, volunteering at the Altrusa Store at the City Park Elementary School, or any number of our myriad of opportunities. It was especially nice to see the way our newer members got involved so quickly and enthusiastically.

We awarded eight scholarships to legal students from our Edith DeBusk Scholarship Fund, and six to nursing students from the Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun Scholarship Fund. Our Leita Marsh Leadership in Service Award was revised this year so that we could present a plaque to the honoree and a \$500 donation to the 501c(3) organization that nominated the winner. The SPCA nominated Susie Moore and her Therapy Dog, Zip, who work their special magic with severely ill people in several area hospitals. There was TV coverage of the presentation, but the reporter forgot to mention Altrusa – it was a close encounter with publicity!

Our Ways and Means Co-Chairs, *Patti Ivey-Petersen* and *Michelle Smith*, put on an elegant and successful Sunday Brunch and Auction. This event netted \$10,000 for our scholarships and service projects next year.

For her final report, President Swanson brought her model railroad caboose tonight to indicate that the Altrusa Express had completed its journey and to remind us of the little engine that could. She met her goal while saying: “I think I can! I think I can! I know I can!”

Editor’s note: The following awards for this club year were presented at District Conference held in Lubbock April 5 – 7, 2002:

Second Place for the Newsletter Award (Communiqué)

Second Place for the Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award

2001-2002

In May 2001, members picked up their pens to write a “Waltz of Service”, the theme President *Ailsa Lewis* chose for her second term. She selected the waltz because it is a light-hearted, upbeat piece of music or a rather regal and glamorous dance in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Its letters stood for:

- W**—With love we recruit and we nurture
- A**—All together we give service to our community
- L**—Lead and make new leaders
- T**—Tell the story of our purpose
- Z**—Zest and encouragement for new leadership.

The goals for the year were:

1. To adopt “The Waltz” as the theme for the year, because to waltz is to move lightly and nimbly.
2. To have imagination in program planning and program titles. More thought about decorations.
3. To hope that club members will embrace gracious formality in meetings.
4. Increase membership but nurture the members we have.
5. Practice Altrusa Principles in all that we do.
6. Handle our work in the lightness, dignity, and camaraderie of the Waltz – coming to the climax of the year with a sense of togetherness and accomplishment, knowing we have aided our community as “Leaders in Service” as we ourselves have grown closer.

Our Service Waltz started in July with the 30 members contributing to 47th Altrusa International Convention held at the Adams-Mark Hotel in Downtown Dallas. Our own *Betty Lawson*, Past Governor, served as Convention Coordinator. *Beth McPherson* served as the Convention Newsletter Editor. *Carolyn Rash* served as Coordinator for the Convention Service Project – TUGS (collecting T-shirts, Underwear, Garments and Socks). The donated items were given to the Refugee Services of North Texas. With matching grants, this project netted the Center over \$32,000 in merchandise and money. Our club donated 13 T-shirts, 275 pairs of underwear, 13 garments, 407 pairs of socks, plus \$45, for a total of 657 items or about 15% of the total received. Others helped with taking registrations, manning the service booth, singing a welcome song or with the Altrusa Singers, helping with decorations, taking tickets at events, or welcoming participants to our wonderful city.

During the year, the club sponsored six events at Letot. The Communications Committee was in charge of the July visit, when flower pots were decorated and flowers planted, and the March visit, when caps were decorated. Membership Development sponsored the September and December visits. Both of these visits included Polaroid pictures of the residents, which they

mounted in frames they decorated. The December visit also included a face painter and Santa Claus. The Service Committee led the October and February visits. The October visit celebrated Make a Difference Day with a Halloween theme, with decorated pumpkins. February used a Valentine's theme with a relay race, which was a hit with both the residents and the counselors. At all the events, theme-appropriate food was served that is enjoyed by all. Over \$300 was spent on these wonderful activities.

In addition to the events at Letot, Directors for the Center, Sam Quattrochi and Marty White, presented a program on the educational activities at the center. They shared a letter, which read in part "*As Altrusa Volunteers, you have humbly demonstrated to us your humanitarianism and patriotism, long before this compelling time*" (speaking of the September 11 disaster). The club presented Letot with a check for \$1500 to cover 24 "Leap Pads" equipped with reading software and headphones, which would provide professional tools to accomplish their mission with young people.

At the Juvenile Department's "Breakfast of Champions" on October 13, the Department presented the club with the "Longevity Award". In addition, the Juvenile Department nominated the club for the Outstanding Adult Group Volunteer of the year, sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Dallas County.

International Relations were emphasized during several of our programs and service projects. A representative from the Refugee Services of North Texas explained their programs and services, including the work with the "Lost Boys" of Africa. Since several of our members had met some of the boys, who were featured on TV wearing T-shirts donated through the TUGS project, this aspect of their work held special interest to us. Another speaker spoke of the Center for Survivors of Torture, with 15,000 survivors living in this area. Our ASTRA club at Thomas C. Marsh Middle School was another example of International Relations at work. In December, several members attended the initiation of 97 ASTRA members, which was broadcast to the whole school. The ASTRA president is Muslim and the vice-president is Hispanic. Both attended a club meeting in February honoring ASTRA and were delightful. The ASTRA club received a commendation from the Dallas Public Schools for donation to a relief fund for neighboring apartments damaged by fire. They also assisted a man from Cuba who had lost his job.

Another project with international ties is City Park Elementary School. Many of the children at the school have a Mexican heritage. The Altrusa Store was opened at the school five times during the year. The students, having received tickets for good behavior and improved grades, were able to redeem the tickets for books, coloring books, backpacks, pencils, notebooks, and more. The Social Skills Saturday featured a young man who had moved to this country from South America when he was twelve years old, not knowing a word of English. He told the participants about his journey and experiences. During a lunch

partially donated, Altrusans assisted the students with proper table manners and conversation. Certificates and T-shirts were given to the fifth-graders; and certificates, a small gift and T-shirts were given the sixth-grade graduates. To support a new endeavor at the school, the club submitted and was granted a \$500 grant from the Altrusa International Foundation. The money was used to create a "Sunshine Room", and supplied the room with 276 items of clothing to be given to students as needed. Almost \$3,200 was spent on the school for Altrusa Store, the Sunshine Room, and Social Skills Saturday.

The East Dallas Police Storefront represented a different aspect of International Relations. During December, \$400 was donated to gift certificates to furnish Christmas dinner for the Southeast Asians and others serviced by the Storefront. The Boy Scout Troop and Self Esteem Center received \$600 from the club for their programs. Sgt. Ray Ball addressed the club in April and explained the boxing and golf program provided to the boys and girls in the areas.

The Ruth Behrens Fund for Crime Prevention provided \$1500 to the SPCA for their Link seminar, "Breaking the Cycle of Violence," in October. In March, a representative from SPCA showed a video featuring their program where troubled teens handled troubled dogs. The teens' behavior improved significantly as a result of having responsibility for the dogs.

A \$500 donation was given to a representative of Our Friends' Place, after she presented a program on the facilities available through this agency. The Edith DeBusk Scholarship for Legal Studies awarded \$2000 in scholarships. The Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun Scholarship for Nursing awarded \$1500 in scholarships. The recipients and their school sponsor attended the first meeting in May. The Person-to-Person fund also spent \$500. The club donated \$50 to Altrusa International Foundation as honorariums. Several members manned the phones for the KERA pledge drive.

The Membership Development Committee started the year with a first annual "President's Ice Cream Social" on the first Saturday in June. This committee honored our new members at the first meeting of the year. Prince Charming (*Beth McPherson*) led us to those whom the Altrusa shoe fit. New members were given Altrusa T-shirts and seasoned members received "survival kits". The membership drive occurred in September, with Governor Mary Osentowski the featured speaker. Two orientations were held. The first was on October 30, where new members and veterans alike learned "How to Orchestrate a Service Project". The second was on February 16, with a chili cook-off. This also served as a mini-membership drive and we brainstormed on how to select a service project. A leadership development program, "Motivating the Volunteer", was presented in November. With this committee's hard work and dedication, membership increased from 40 to 47.

The Communications Committee was also busy this year. In addition to our excellent newsletter, the *Communiqué*, and our invaluable yearbook, this committee maintained the Web site. This committee was in charge of our club birthday meeting in October and the Altrusa Anniversary meeting in April. For our 73rd birthday celebration, several representatives from our children and grandchildren clubs attended and shared the festivities. The District visitor, Director Janet Otness, celebrated the Anniversary with us. This meeting was interrupted a couple of times with tornado warnings, with the members and our visitor asked to go the ladies room. Luckily this is a fairly large room, where some of our members didn't miss an opportunity to recruit new members.

The Ways and Means committee sponsored one large and a couple of small fundraising events. A wine tasting netted \$400 and the sale of Innisbrook wrapping paper netted over \$400. Our silent and live auction had a western theme this year. It was held on March 23 at Fairview Farms, with barbecue and all the "fixins". Elvis joined the band for a couple of songs and the crowd went wild.

With 615 service hours provided by the club, the "Waltz of Service" was a huge success.

Editor's note: The Communiqué was awarded third place in the Newsletter Award at District Conference held in Dallas April 4 – 6, 2003. Our Club Display showing our Waltz of Service won first place. In addition, the club received the Distinguished Club Award from International President Phyllis Corman.

2002-2003

When *Beth McPherson* was installed, she stood before the club with a simple box of crayons and asked us to get back to basics, to remember that each of us has talent to contribute—our own unique color. She invited us to revisit the Principles of Altrusa through our meeting Accents and her monthly message in our newsletter, and to adopt the theme of "Counting On Our Principles".

She challenged us to five simple goals with one significant goal in mind—to bring us together in the spirit of Altrusa, what Mamie L. Bass described as "having pure motives and unselfish hearts."

Our first goal: **Let's talk about it!** The separate committees of this club will make **ONE** cohesive unit, sharing all methods of communication and enjoying numerous fellowship opportunities.

This one goal was really three: to combine our committees' strengths, to enhance member communication, and to simply enjoy each other's company, looking beyond the imaginary lines drawn by our committee structure and cultivating every member's full participation and input. We started refining our leadership skills early in the year, as *Carolyn Rash* taught us how to "tame those butterflies" during an annual leadership development workshop.

And we enhanced communication among members, instituting our Altrusa Bulletin system, in which eMaster *Paula Jo Strive* sent news instantaneously via e-mail or e-Buddy. Communications Committee Chair *Susie Stephenson* cut \$160 from club expenses by e-mailing the *Communiqué*. We enhanced our club yearbook, added a convenient little roster book of members' contact information, and updated our Web site touting our fantastic Spring Fling FUN-Raiser.

Membership Development Chairs *Michelle Smith* and *Jean DeWald* started off the year with a motivating Altrusa New Year celebration. *Ailsa Lewis* taught us about holiday traditions at our Altrusa Holiday Celebration. We learned about our newer members through our Profiles in Friendship at meetings and in the newsletter. We let them in on some exciting secrets about our seasoned members with our New-Member Bingo game. With a prize incentive, it took no time at all for newbies like *Angela Weber* (our first winner) to discover that *Floy Bourn* blows bubble-gum bubbles to relax.

Our second goal: **Let's make our name known!** Evaluate **TWO** of our best service projects, either from our current program or implemented this club year, in preparation for either one to become our club's "signature" project within the time frame established by our Long-Range/Strategic Plan.

Our Long-Range/Strategic Plan called for the development of an ongoing service project that would be synonymous with Altrusa International Inc. of

Dallas, Texas. With *100 percent* membership participation in a month of literacy projects *every day* of September, the collection of 5,588 books and the logging of almost 500 volunteer hours, the Service Committee unanimously voted to build on our fledgling "Countdown to Literacy" project, hoping that people all over North Texas will think "literacy" when they see "Altrusa," and perhaps just as importantly, *they will think "Altrusa"!*

Literacy month was a smashing success. We targeted adult, school-age, ESL, and family literacy, sponsoring such unique events as an American Indian storyteller at City Park Elementary, creating bilingual flash cards, and impulsively volunteering to stuff 500 envelopes for LIFT at a club meeting. Throughout the month, we delivered bilingual books to 35 elementary schools and sponsored ongoing book drives at our offices and churches. On September 29 we shuffled, stamped, and sorted reading material for 26 recipient organizations, then began delivering them on September 30. The magic of this project was that it reached an unlimited number of people and allowed each Altrusan to use her time and talents for service as she was available.

Our other service projects included:

- Our ASTRA club at T. C. Marsh Middle School received a \$500 grant, and helped us with literacy month by collecting books and sponsoring a poster contest. ASTRA Chair *Angela Weber* encouraged us to sponsor 19 ASTRA members at the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. We participated in their Career Day.
- In its fifth year, the Altrusa Store at City Park Elementary School continued to touch the lives of disadvantaged students. This year, Altrusans lit up the faces of more than 300 kids with school supplies and gifts that they earned with good behavior and academic achievement.
- Another City Park Project, the Sunshine Room, flourished with **XXX** items of new clothing donated for students who can't afford their own.
- *Jan Hemphill* led our annual Social Skills Saturday. More than **XX** fifth- and sixth-graders at City Park learned the arts of conversation and table manners, and were inspired by personal story by *Guadalupe Carvajal*.
- *Shelley Traub* and *Shana Spence* led the expansion of our work at Our Friends' Place to include personal mentoring for the young women residents. After an in-depth study of the agency's needs and our resources, we sponsored two mentoring projects in the spring—a craft event and a lawn-beautification and cookout. Also for Our Friends' Place, we filled backpacks for Christmas in July.
- *Dawn Cameron*, *Michelle May*, *Shelley Traub*, *Lisa Cameron*, and *Guadalupe Carvajal* spearheaded the development and implementation of the new-member project, Seminars for Safety. The seminars taught personal safety and crime prevention to women living in Dallas apartment complexes and publicized Altrusa. Guest speakers were from the Dallas Police Department. More than twenty businesses and organizations donated items for goody bags, door prizes and the refreshment tables.

- *Phyllis Meyerson* coordinated our Letot visits, where we contributed funds to purchase chairs.
- On an international level, we brought 81 toy donations and loaded 15 gift bags of baby supplies for the families served by the East Dallas Police Storefront. We spent Make A Difference Day at Letot, sorting 432 TUGS items for Refugee Services of North Texas. We sponsored an elegant Neiman-Marcus lunch for a delegation of 12 Russian men and women, introducing them to Altrusa and, of course, some special Dallas hospitality.
- *Michelle* and *Ella Smith* helped us collect seven bulging bags of personal toiletry items for Crossroads Interfaith Housing. More than \$230 in canned goods and monetary donations were given to the North Texas Food Bank—thanks to *Janet Dressman's* neighborhood food drive.
- Person-to-Person Fund gave \$500 to help a little boy's family purchase leg braces so that he could continue to walk, play baseball, and do all the things a 7-year-old does. The Ruth Behrens Fund for Crime Prevention got our new-member project off the ground and helped fund the SPCA of Texas' PREP Program, pairing young men from Youth Village with dogs from the SPCA in a therapeutic training regimen.
- We awarded four \$500 scholarships from the Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun Scholarship for Nursing Studies; four \$500 scholarships from the Edith DeBusk Scholarship Fund for Legal Studies, and a new \$500 pharmacy scholarship in honor of charter member Leita Marsh—all of which were presented at our annual Scholarship Night.

More than 1,920 service hours were performed in the name of Altrusa.

Our third goal: ***Let's work together!*** Use your imagination to help **THREE** of our four standing committees to develop joint efforts, offering our members a unique opportunity to work together and strengthening all committees in the process.

With the harmony built among members during our September literacy project, everyone was poised to work together *all the time*. This goal asked three of our committees to work in tandem with another throughout the year, so here are the highlights:

- The new-member project, Seminars for Safety, was the best example. The Membership Development, Communications, and Finances committees were all enhanced—the 21 new members took ownership of their own project, which strengthened retention; they honed their communications skills through our Bulletin system and by sheer pavement-pounding; and they gained valuable experience by requesting funds for their project. The new members got their recruiting feet wet by introducing their seminar participants to Altrusa and following up by inviting them to a meeting.
- The Service Committee had 18 major projects and invited other committees to enjoy the fun, including assigning Letot visits to Membership Development and

Communications. Service and Communications enhanced our public image with publicity for our club birthday, Literacy Month project, FUN-raiser, and new-member project. Communications and Membership Development joined to increase attendance and enhance Altrusans' knowledge at two orientations and several mini-membership drives. The February orientation theme had an International focus, which helped our newer members understand the true scope of the organization. And even Finances got into the act, taking advantage by asking Communications for help to raise \$440 for the International Foundation during its emphasis months of October and April.

Our fourth goal: ***Let's share our resources!*** Spread the word about Altrusa so that at least **FOUR** of our daughter and/or granddaughter clubs will be assisted in their membership recruiting efforts.

This goal was met under the guidance of New Club Building Chair *Betty Lawson*, who devoted countless hours to revitalizing our daughter club NE Dallas County, laying the groundwork for a new club in *Irving* and examining the prospect of a club in *Waxahachie*. Members *Carolyn Rash* and *Valeta Gentzler* attended the organizational meeting of the new Garland club, where their Altrusa testimonies helped persuade eight of the eleven guests to become affiliate members on the spot. Individual efforts also made a big difference in Altrusa recruiting, with members scouring their contacts to refer potential new members to daughter clubs Southwest Dallas County, Denton, and Texarkana. President McPherson visited the San Antonio and Arlington PM clubs, where she shared our club publications and some membership retention ideas.

We spread the word about Altrusa all over the metroplex. *Linda McCalla* organized an Altrusa appearance on Dallas Community Television in celebration of Women's History Month. The program, "Women and Literacy," starred Governor Mary Osentowski and representatives from Letot and the East Dallas Police Storefront. The 30-minute program aired seven times in April alone, reaching more than 157,000 households.

Our fifth goal: ***Let's build Altrusa!*** Strive to initiate **FIVE** new members net above our highest membership level in this District biennium, with an ultimate goal of increasing our Club to 70 active members.

Blending our Long-Range/Strategic Plan goal of reaching 70 members with the Governor's goal that each club bring in four additional members each year, we sought to add five. We introduced new methods to enhance our own membership, including personal mailings of our club brochure to businesses and individuals. *Lana Ford Carpenter* represented our club on the Dallas Women's Council, from which came numerous opportunities for recruitment, publicity, and service, including our luncheon with the Russian delegation.

Membership Development Chair *Michelle Smith* aimed high and achieved her goal of 15 new members—a 27 percent increase in membership. Our Membership Development Committee was so effective that *Sue Powell* had initiated our fifth new member within the first two months of the club year.

Every goal was exceeded far beyond expectations—mainly because of the tireless, selfless dedication of our members. The numbers tell the story:

- Sales of event tickets, chance tickets, silent auction items, and casino chips at the Spring Fling FUN-Raiser, chaired by *Lana Ford Carpenter* and *Karen Wise*, netted almost \$10,000. With \$559 earned from Innsbrook wrapping paper sales, \$845 raised through chance ticket sales at District Nine's Fall Leadership Event and Conference, \$286 with Season's Greetings in the Communiqué, and \$1,200 from a wine-tasting party in the spring, the Ways and Means Committee donated hundreds of planning hours and raised \$17,501, before expenses.
- Eleven members attended the Fall Leadership Event, twenty attended Conference.
- Our members made the difference, donating 1,400 volunteer hours in service to the club and contributing 680 hours of other types of community service. The estimated number of people reached this year, including those who saw the DCTV program and read James Ragland's column about Seminars for Safety, amount to more than 2 million.

The last paragraph of President Beth's report read, "In preparing this synopsis of the year for you, I waded through stacks of papers, jotting notes here and there, and delighting in remembering such an outstanding year. Last year I stood before you and thanked you for being the legacy that came before me. I told you that you could count on me. And I cried, like I always do when something touches my heart. This year has been a blessing—both to my spirit and to our club. And YOU, my dear sisters in Altrusa, are the reason. Thank you!"

Editor's note: The club won the following awards at District Conference held in Temple April 2 – 4, 2004:

- *First Place – Mamie L. Bass Service Award (Seminars for Safety)*
- *First Place – Letha H. Brown Literacy Award (Literacy Month project)*
- *Second Place – Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Award*
- *Second Place – Joella Terrill Butler Membership Award*
- *Second Place – Newsletter Award (Communiqué)*
- *Second Place – Yearbook Award*
- *First Place – Club Display Award*

2003-2004

The theme for the year was ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN. President *Paula Amschler* chose that theme not only because of her love dogs but also because she believes we are all equal in God's eyes, strengths and gifts to give and weaknesses and shortcomings to overcome.

City Park Elementary School was by far our biggest service success. From the Altrusa Store to Social Skills Saturday, to filled backpacks and to teacher goodie boxes, we continued to be positive role models, teaching important life lessons and providing valuable supplies to a student body and staff in need.

We also continued to do good work at LETOT. Although participation was low, it only took a handful of Altrusans to show a group of teenagers that although their parents or teachers may have let them down, there are adults willing to spend time with them. And hopefully we taught them the value of volunteering, by combining mentoring with joint service projects like making get well cards for Children's Medical Center and counting TUGS items.

Our Friends Place was another organization where a few of us had a huge impact on a small group of young women who need strong professional women role models. Our work at both the group home and transitional living center was sporadic, but important. Interacting with the girls while showing them how to tie a scarf, make inexpensive jewelry or use a computer taught them much more than how to tie a scarf, make jewelry or use a computer.

We helped the Refugee Services Center of North Texas in several ways this year. We collected, sorted with the help of LETOT, and delivered 258 TUGS items to help newly arrived refugees. Our first new member, *Lili Feingold*, eagerly demonstrated our never-ending ingenuity and desire to serve by asking the Refugee Center what specific simple need we could fill, then challenged the rest of the club to donate bottles of shampoo. And recognizing that the refugees the center services literally arrive here with nothing more than the shirt on their back, and feeling the patriotism of loving our county so much, the new-member project, spearheaded by our first two members this year, *Lili* and *Ashley Hill*, centered on providing the refugee center bed linens. These sheets and pillows gave the refugees a clean bed to sleep in and started them down the path of loving the United States as much as we do.

Our Literacy Project again gave us the chance to work together as small teams and one large Altrusa team to fight illiteracy in the Metroplex. This project recognized Altrusa International's focus on literacy. In addition to several small projects that provided specific service to people, such as tutoring and flashcards, our month-long literacy project gave us the chance to put literally thousands of books into the hands of children and adults throughout our community.

While ASTRA club at Marsh Middle School was not thought of as a service project, but what better way to provide service than to foster future volunteers for our community. We supported our ASTRA club in several ways this year – sponsoring several members in the Race for the Cure, enlisting their help in literacy month with a book drive, helping to host a booth at “Meet Marsh Middle School” night to raise awareness for ASTRA, and providing speakers for Career Day – an event sponsored by the ASTRA club. It’s extremely important to stay closely involved in our ASTRA club – they are our future.

In addition to our main service projects, several projects spread throughout the year gave members the chance to make small contributions to a wide variety of organizations.

- Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, an event that raises funds to help fight breast cancer – a cause that hits very close to home.
- KERA pledge drive, which helped preserve public television and promote our name.
- SPCA’s Pet-O-Meals program by providing 42 Christmas stockings stuffed with goodies for dogs and cats that were delivered to Meals On Wheels recipients with pets. The pets provide companionship and value to a lonely senior citizen’s life. Their son or daughter may not call or visit often, but their pet is there for them every day, providing unconditional love. Our work this year helped senior citizens on a fixed income feed one of their reasons to live.
- North Texas Food Bank - at our party in West Pittsburgh last July, members brought non-perishable food items.
- Temple Free Clinic - we participated in the District Conference Service project by bringing sugar-free items to fill a basket for the clinic.
- Scholarships - we awarded 6 scholarships for a total of \$2,250 from the Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun Scholarship Fund for Nursing Studies, the Edith DeBusk Scholarship Fund for Legal Studies, and to honor Leitha Marsh.
- Person to Person - again this year we used our person to person money to help Justin Graham, a young son of a firefighter, who’s physical needs continue to grow as quickly as his young body does.

But Service was only part of the picture. President Paula thanked us, her Altrusa sisters, for rising to the occasion when needed. In total, our club gave over 1100 hours of service to the club, for everything from newsletters to fund-raising to bookkeeping. In addition to thanking the group as a whole, she thanked the following members for accomplishments that helped her survive her term as president.

Susie Stephenson – for the monthly newsletter, without fail, as a work of art. It did so much more than inform our members. It provided a history of our work. In preparing her annual report, Paula browsed through each issue and was constantly surprised and reminded of what we accomplished during the year. She could not have written her annual report and nor four reports without the *Communiqué*. President Paula also thanked Susie for stepping in as Secretary when our elected secretary resigned.

Michelle May and Guadalupe Carvajal, chairs of our Membership Development committee – for the our two parties to watch the movies *Chicago* and *Grease*. Michelle dancing and singing to “Momma” and all of us crooning “Look at me, I’m Sandra Dee” were memorable moments. What wonderful opportunities to let our hair down and bond as sisters.

Lana Ford-Carpenter and Sue Powell – for filling the vacancies when two directors resigned in the middle of the year.

Beth McPherson and Shelley Traub – for agreeing to fill the Ways and Means co-chair vacancies.

Carolyn Swanson – for providing timely and informative e-mail bulletins that keep us working together efficiently, filling in as Audit Committee chair when our appointed chair’s health prevented her from completing the task, taking over managing reservations when the initial reservationists were called away to take care of their mother. Carolyn also gave hours of service to both treasurers to help provide our club with financial reports.

And now, sister Altrusans, I must also ask for your forgiveness.

President Paula also made two life altering decisions, one that has brought her nothing but unending joy and deep peace in her heart. The other decision has brought her nothing but stress and physical pain in her stomach. When Mitch asked her to be his wife last September, it only took her a few weeks to know that she couldn’t wait any longer to start the rest of her life with the man she had waited 40 years for. After taking her from Paula Jo Strive to Paula Amschler, Mitch listened to her brag, complain, whine and cheer about her Altrusa accomplishments and struggles. It was comforting to know she had someone other than Beth to share her REAL thoughts with.

The other decision was to start a new business with her husband and a friend. That endeavor cost her countless hours of hard work, frustration, worry, hope, stress and not just a little bit of money. It was difficult, but she firmly believe that when Mitch and she survive the “new business” pains, they’ll be well on their way to the future and home of their dreams.

President Paula challenged the Ways and Means chairs to simplify our fund-raising efforts. This proved more difficult to accomplish than anticipated. The end result: We lost two very enthusiastic members who were too new to handle the pressure of managing what some might view as our livelihood and we raised less than planned.

The Membership goal was also a challenge. The initial target was set at 60, the current membership number was 55. Attrition caused the starting number to fall to 44, presenting *Michelle May* and *Guadalupe Carvajal* the daunting task of bring in 16 new members. They never once complained, just worked diligently to improve member retention and encourage all Altrusans to bring guests and prospective members to meetings. We did get seven this year: *Lili Feingold*, *Ashley Hill*, *Sue Anderson*, *Clare Fischer*, *Latricia Stein*, *Phyllis Newman* and *Constance Blaylock*. They will continue to make worthwhile contributions to Altrusa and their community.

And lastly, sister Altrusans, President Paula asked for our help by:

- Supporting the President and board. If requests are made, don't wait to be specifically asked – rise to the task.
- Actively participating in your committee work. Each committee has specific tasks as well as meeting responsibilities. When your committee chairs contact you and ask you at the last minute to chair a meeting or present an accent – say YES.
- Supporting your Ways and Means chairs.
- Reading your e-bulletins. It only takes a few minutes a day. Each bulletin is important, even if you don't think it's important to you.
- Asking for help. Pick up the phone and call a fellow member. Start with your committee members and go from there.
- Committing to giving of yourselves every month, outside of Altrusa meetings. Attending meetings is easy – it's regular, it's the same day every month, it's at the same time. Participating in service projects takes a little more effort. Please make the effort.
- And most importantly, staying an Altrusan. Over the years, literally dozens of women come and go. Some left from embarrassment or hurt feelings, some because they moved away, but most because they did not become Altrusans. They joined the club, but didn't commit to making Altrusa a part of their life, a part of who they are. Once you commit, you realize that the sense of belonging that comes with being a part of something wonderful, is a much greater reward than the time spent. Be proud to say "I'm an Altrusan."

President Paula started her annual report with the following:

“Just as I start each day with a prayer to Thank God for the blessings in my life, most importantly my beautiful husband, Mitch, I'd like to end my year as President with this Altrusa prayer to you.

Dear Altrusa sisters, Thank you for all your service to the Dallas community. My service goal of presenting a minimum of two service opportunities per month seemed overwhelming at first, but thanks to superior planning by Service Chairs, *Beth McPherson* and *Sidelle Illion*, and the hard work of numerous project leads, that goal was accomplished. With so many opportunities, we were able to give of ourselves in numerous ways to a wide variety of organizations and people. In total, our club gave approximately 1050 hours of Altrusa service to our community, and an additional 160 hours of other community service.”

At the end of her report, President Paula said, “So, Ladies, this dog is not ready for heaven yet, but she's definitely ready to change from lead sled dog, to the back of the pack.”

Editor's note: The club won the following awards at District Conference held in Dallas April 1 – 3, 2005 and hosted by Altrusa International, Inc. of Dallas:

- *First Place – Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations*
- *Second Place – Yearbook Award*

2004-2005

President *Phyllis Meyerson* chose “Sayings” for the club theme. She asked each of us to share our favorite sayings with her to be included in the Accents and *Communiqué* articles. It was fun finding appropriate sayings for each meeting.

These were the goals established for the year:

1. Membership – Maintain current membership level.
2. Service - Simplify and consolidate service projects.
3. Fundraising - Stabilize fundraising project(s) to insure continual revenue.
4. Communication – Maintain the high quality of our Yearbook and Communiqué.
5. Conference – Every member will need to assist, to ensure a very successful District Nine Conference.
6. No nitpicky audit – Establish ongoing reasonable audit procedures.
7. Get through the year with the help of all members.

Membership – “A lost opportunity is lost forever”

When setting this goal in April before the installation, President Phyllis thought this goal was achievable. With the initiation of four new members before the end of last year, the goal got to be a lot more difficult than anticipated. Last year ended with 52 members and this year ended with 50 members, which included 11 new members and one transfer. Overall we really did great even if we did not make the goal. However this is a very bad trend. President Phyllis equated the trend to being weighed at the doctor’s office each year and being told that you only gained a few pounds, but after enough years you are fat. The membership trend is similar – if we start each year with fewer members than the year before, eventually we cease to exist.

The prizes offered to new member sponsors aren’t the main motivation for bringing in new members. Our members will do that without the need for any prize or incentive. The Membership Committee experienced some bumps over the year, but even the replacement of one of its co-chairs in the middle of the year did not hinder the Committee in performing its duties. President Phyllis expressed her thanks to *Anne Reed* for taking over the job of co-chair and doing such a great job and to her committee members who all helped.

The Membership Committee had two member orientations that were both fun and informative. One of the highlights for President Phyllis was *Frances Maloney* correcting her comments on parliamentary procedure, one of her favorite topics anyway (not really).

There were two membership drives in addition to Add an Altrusa Day. The Committee tried to do something different by performing quarterly new member initiations. The timing of these initiations did not work well with the timing of dues payments. Being a member for a couple of months before initiation did not make the new members feel special.

Many from our club worked with seven other clubs in District Nine at the Women's Expo. The event showcased Altrusa to over 14,000 Expo participants; we did all that at the last minute and used candy bars as a give away.

Communication – *“If you don't know where you've been, you don't know where you're going”*

Thanks to *Jan Hemphill* and *Janice Schwarz* for agreeing to Co-Chair this Committee. Our Yearbook and Communiqué are the best. And whether we win awards or not, we all know it. The *Communiqué* is just chocked full of great information and pictures. President Phyllis thanked *Susie Stephenson*, Editor, for all her work on this. The Yearbook with its companion roster is a consent reference for all members. President Phyllis thanked *Beth McPherson* for her work on the year book. The Club sent out over 100 e-mail bulletins during the club year. President Phyllis thanked *Carolyn Swanson* for keeping everyone updated and correcting all submissions before the e-mail bulletins were sent.

Audit and Finances – *“Don't buy what you cannot afford”*

Having been Treasurer for several years, President Phyllis felt that “no nit picky audit” was an appropriate goal. The Audit Committee under *Shana Spence's* direction only commented on significant issues in last year's books, as requested. Unfortunately they did not write-up their procedures for future Audit Committees.

For fundraising, *Beth McPherson* and *Paula Amschler* threw a hell of a party with “Divas, Dealers and Decadence”. The total income for all fundraisers was about \$5,500, which included the Auction, ticket sales at Conference, the Wine Tasting and Season Greetings. In spite of the success of the fundraiser, we are still looking for that one fundraiser that can be repeated each year with increased success and that will generate substantial income. Thanks to *Carolyn Swanson* and *Ellen Heffner* as Treasurers. It is not an easy job. Our high tech Treasurers implemented new on-line access to the bank statements, which meant they were able to have their financial reports ready early in the following month.

Service – *“Buy me, get me, bring me, take me, I need, I want, I got to have”*

This is a definition of a princess and our service projects are in no way princesses. Our projects were stabilized to some extent this year. We added one new project, Vogel Alcove. We bought baby formula and they were the focus of our literacy project, First Books.

We combined a few projects from last year into our project for the Refugee Services of North Texas. We had a wonderful speaker who brought a refugee who shared her experiences with us. We supplied TUGS and toiletries to the Refugee Services. Our largest project was furnishing an apartment for a refugee family for which we collected so much stuff we furnished four apartments.

City Park School continued as in previous years. We conducted five stores and for those of you who have not attended, yes it is hard work, but very rewarding. This year's City Park School project benefited from a \$1,000 grant applied for during Paula's Presidency. The grant was specifically allocated to the Store. Our Sunshine room continues to help provide clothes for the students. This year's Social Skills Saturday was one of the best, since it was extremely well attended by the students and our club. The motivational speaker really resonated with the kids. Even though the Altrusans didn't had no clue who he was, but all the kids knew him. Shelly's talk helped the children understand basic manners. The rest of us served the meal on real dishes. Everyone including the Altrusans had a great time.

We continued to support Letot Center. We made four visits including our annual Halloween party. Santa visited for Christmas and we had the Letot residents made Flash Cards for the City Park School. *Susan Linnstaedter* always said this was a circle of service, since we were doing service and the kids were doing service for others. We donated money to Letot to help them refurnish their residential furniture.

Our involvement in Our Friends Place was less than last year. We provided each resident of both the Group Home and the Transitional Living Center with a \$25 gift card at Christmas. Some of us visited each facility once. With the younger girls, we decorated sweat shirts. For the older girls, we gave them with a helpful pamphlet on things they should know after they turn 18.

The SPCA again received Christmas stockings for Pet O Meals. This project provides food for the pets of recipients of Meals On Wheels. We know we cannot convince everyone of the value of our involvement with the SPCA, but all of our projects have been designed to help people along with animals.

Our ASTRA Club continues to flourish under the leadership of Marilyn Robinson of Marsh Middle School. *Angela Weber* had a great idea so that more of us could take part in the Race for Cure by funding the participation of ASTRA students thus allowing us to stay home in our pajamas. Angela really knew her audience. *Floy Bourn* and *Sandra Blassingame* accepted the job of Service Co-Chairs and they kept all projects under control.

We had over 600 hours Community Service, about 4,700 for member Service Hours and over 600 for other volunteer hours. We gave 7 scholarships for \$500 each for total of \$3,500. And our Person to Person funds of \$500 were given to *Sherry Long*, a former club member who is ill and continues to need help

in paying for her medical insurance. From our Ruth Behrens Fund we gave \$1,000 to the DWI Enforcement Foundation of North Texas to help them establish a new DWI Commend Center.

Conference – “*Don’t promise what you can’t deliver*” – *Boy did we deliver!*

Conference could have totally distracted us from anything else, but it didn’t. Our Conference was the best Conference ever and it will be hard for other clubs to follow our lead. The new features of the Conference including the books as presents from our club, lanyards for the name tags, and table assignments were very well received. For the Conference Service Project, we provided stuffed animals and books to the Scottish Rite Hospital. The grand totals of our donations to Scottish Rite were: 459 stuffed animals, 500 books, \$1,158 in monetary contributions, 25 baskets of silk flowers from the Friday night decorations and the remaining adult books (4 boxes) to be sold in their annual book sale. Our club made a donation to International for our own new Governor *Carolyn Rash* in order for her to become a Lamplighter. The best events of the Conference were President Phyllis’ two speeches and the after banquet party. *Carolyn Swanson* and *Susie Stephenson*, our Conference Co-Chairs were super and they both missed the meeting in which everyone in the club bragged on them.

Miscellaneous – “*Whether the stone hits the pitcher or the pitcher hits the stone, its going to be bad for the pitcher*”

Starbucks in conjunction with the Texas Rangers named our club as one of twenty Community Heroes. Our club was recognized during the sold out Hall of Fame game. As part of the recognition, we received forty tickets to the game and forty \$5 Starbuck gift certificates. We managed to distribute all the tickets to Altrusans and their family and friends within three days through our wonderful e-mail communication system. In spite of it being very hot (what else would we expect in July in Dallas), we all had a great time at the game. Thanks to Jack Rash for nominating our club. The Board decided to split equally the Starbucks gift certificates between Membership and Ways and Means.

Our meeting programs always get great ratings. Of course *Carolyn Rash’s* Leadership Program always gets good marks since she gives out chocolate. Our club had a good turnout for the Fall Leadership Event in Amarillo.

We lost three of our members this year: *Marguerite Ray*, *Lorraine Griffin Kerchner* and *Hazel Griffith*. They were all wonderful women.

President Phyllis shared the following thanks:

- To *Michelle May* for keeping up on meetings by sending the e-mails with everything for the agendas. Michelle also agreed to take over the Dallas Women’s Coalition and keep all of us updated with articles.
- To *Frances Maloney*, Parliamentarian for keeping her in line as much as anyone can.

- To *Sidelle Illion* who agreed to go from an easy job of Director to the harder job of Secretary.
- To *Jodee Sedalnick* who agreed to fill Sidelle's Director position.
- To *Linda McCalla* who filled another Director position
- To President-Elect *Ruth Muller* who presided at three meetings
- To *Lou Boucher*, who sponsored Phyllis and who was unable to attend much this year, although she did make a few Letot visits with her grandchildren. Lou called the Club "Old Lady Do Gooders", so Phyllis felt totally justified in using that term.

Conclusion – *"All's well that ends well" or a "Job worth doing is worth doing well"*

Note from the editor – I left the conclusion as Phyllis wrote it.

"When Carolyn twisted my arm to take this job, I was going into a meeting and trying to get her off the phone. The objective of that meeting was not achieved until about a month ago. So, all year as I complained about the job, all I could think about was that meeting and that that company had not signed up with ECCHO. Which somehow made being President even worse.

"I didn't want to do this job. I didn't like being called "Madam President". I believe you earn and get respect because of who you are, not because of the position you have. And I did not like being yelled at by everyone, since everything is the President's fault. I got e-mails on everything.

"I am glad I did it. I really liked banging the gavel and running meetings. I am glad our club has a policy of not asking someone to do it twice. I decided that you trade two pretty easy years as President-Elect and Past-President for one hard year as President; unless you are someone like Paula or Beth who volunteered for hard jobs in their Past President year.

"I learned some things; I learned to delegate and to be nicer. Being nice just about killed me, since I am not generally nice. I am glad it is over I went through the process very well because that is what I do.

"Dream Finder – "A dream can be a dream come, it all starts with me and you"

"Don't start what you can't finish" – And I'm finished! All that noise you hear is me cheering. It feels like yesterday when I was ducking and hiding from this job and now it is over. Thank you for a great year."

Editor's note: The club was recognized for having a website and won the following awards at District Conference held in Fort Worth March 24 – 26, 2006:

- *First Place – Newsletter Award for our fabulous Communiqué*
- *Third Place – Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations*
- *Second Place – Total Club Contributions to the International Foundation*

2005-2006

We began this year with President *Ruth Muller's* theme of Reaching for Rainbows. "A rainbow is made of many different colors," Ruth said. "One on one, some colors may clash, but all together they make a beautiful, awe-inspiring sight." It was Ruth's vision for our club that we join together and build a rainbow of service to the community.

Unfortunately, Ruth was unable to complete her tenure of service to see her vision come to fruition. In December, Ruth stepped aside due to serious family problems, and President-Elect *Michelle May* stepped in to carry through with her vision and lead the club forward. We were grateful to Ruth for her vision for this year and her strong desires to see this club flourish. Overall, the club united to carry forward Ruth's vision for this year. Comparing the first half of the year to the second half, attendance at meetings increased by 13%!

General

Ruth had several general goals for the club. The first goal was to explain ourselves better for the benefit of newer club members and guests. Everyone made an effort at meetings to explain our procedures and jargon, and also made the newer members and guests aware of Altrusa information through the various Altrusa websites, our newsletters, the Encyclopedia and other information. The second goal was to prepare specific job descriptions for all of the jobs within the club. The Membership Development Committee took the lead on doing this. The job descriptions were written and the final version was scheduled to be released during the next club year. The third goal was to evaluate each meeting immediately. The quick feedback helped in planning future meetings and in planning for next year. Ruth wanted us to make information available to club members both in written format and electronically. *Beth McPherson* included this information in the yearbook on CD, which was extremely helpful.

Communications Committee

Ruth's goal for the Communications Committee was to maintain the high quality from past years. Ruth asked that the club continue moving into the electronic age, without leaving anyone behind. *Beth McPherson* and *Heidi Heck* lead the way as committee chairs. Beth put together a beautiful yearbook and roster book. Beth continued *Susie Stephenson's* tradition of excellence with the *Communiqué* newsletter. *Carolyn Swanson* continued her terrific efforts as e-master, keeping us informed via 90 email bulletins this year.

Finances Committee

Sidelle Illion and *Elnora Coffin* performed outstandingly in keeping the finances of the club in check. *Phyllis Meyerson*, as always, was an invaluable resource to help everyone stay in balance. Ruth had visions of the Finances and Ways and Means Committee raising money. We tried a new fundraiser this year – Glitterati. It was a success at the beginning of the year, but because of many

factors, including difficulty finding another location to repeat the event, we were unable to repeat the event. Nonetheless, we raised \$5,053 this year for the 2006 Foundation through Glitterati, direct donations and matching funds. Overall, we were successful, almost in spite of our difficulties.

Membership Development Committee

Thank you to *Paula Amschler*, Membership Development Committee Chair, for her efforts. The Committee reviewed the procedures for bringing in new members to the club, implementing the existing procedures to make the process run more smoothly. With her leadership, the Membership Committee initiated 4 new members and accepted 2 transfer members into the club. Plus, 2 more new members were approved, waiting to be initiated in our new club year. Overall, we began the club year with 44 members and ended with 50 members, plus 3 emeritus members, a 13% increase.

Conference Coordinator

Ruth also believed it was important for us to bring enthusiasm to the club about District Conference. To fulfill that vision, *Karen Wise* worked very hard to get us excited about riding our stick horses to Conference. In all, we had 19 members at conference roll-call, which tied with 2 other clubs for the most members counted. After conference, we received recognition for our attendance with a fabulous article in the Dallas Morning News newspaper!

Service Committee

Sue Anderson led the Service Committee to achieve great things this year! Our best-attended service project was City Park Elementary School, where we served a total of 600 hours with 100% participation. The students at City Park are 96% minority and 100% low-income children. Over the course of the year, the school has approximately a 63% turnover in students due to the transient nature of the area served, which includes several homeless shelters. Our City Park school project had several parts. First, we provided the Altrusa Store where the teachers give out tickets as incentives for good behavior that the children can “spend” on goods at the Store like school supplies, stickers, and toys. The Store project had the most community impact of all of our projects – it reached over 260 children at five different stores! Most telling about our impact on the children were the thank-you letters we received, like this one from Dominique:

“Dear Altrusa, Thank you for you spending your time and money. I wish I could do something to help you too. If I were your mail I’d clean the kitchen every day. I would do whatever you say. I wish I was an Altrusa. Thank you for all you’ve done. Sincerely, Dominique”

President-Elect *Michelle* met with several of the teachers at the school and they all said how much the Store impacts their students. Ms. Laura Gonzalez, the 4th and 5th grade Language Arts teacher said: *“Altrusa has been a driving force of support and continuing community involvement at City Park*

Elementary. The Altrusa Store has enabled me as an educator to provide a solid incentive for my students for the past five years.” Ms. Enselek, the school librarian, said: “The excitement in the air on Altrusa Store day is electrifying. Seeing the smiles on the students’ faces as they peruse the items in the store with their tickets in hand is confirmation that the store is a wonderful system. The love and devotion oozes from the Altrusa volunteers as they help each student in our school shop. The Altrusa Store is truly a positive and rewarding experience for all.” Thank you to Sandy Blassingame and Floy Bourn and all of the club members who participated at the store this year.

We also worked hard with the Sunshine Room at the school this year. The Sunshine Room is a clothes closet at City Park school that we maintain, where the school personnel can provide uniforms, undergarments, shoes, coats, and other necessities to the children in need. This project was especially meaningful this year since DISD went to mandatory uniforms for the children. Many of the children could not afford the uniforms and were, therefore, either sent home or put in in-school suspension. Through the efforts of our club, and from donations received outside the club, including from several members of the Downtown Dallas club, we were able to provide 230 new clothing items, 79 used items, and 145 toiletry items to the school. Ms. Enselek said: *“Since our children are required to wear uniforms this year, Altrusa pitched right in and provided uniforms for over 150 of our students. When the weather started turning cold, Altrusa donated over sixty coats to our school.”* Thank you to Floy for spearheading this project!

Our Make a Difference Day project focused on City Park Elementary this year. We painted and redecorated a room at the school where the ESL classes meet. Talk about hands-on service! Ms. Gonzalez, the 4th and 5th grade language arts teacher at the school said: *“The redecorating of our parent room was a priceless and thoughtful gift to our campus. I believe the warmness of the redecorating has helped our adult English classes to be a smashing success.”* Through this project we impacted 60 people in the ESL classes. Thank you Sandy for suggesting this as a project and for making a difference!

And, finally, Social Skills Saturday was a resounding success again this year. *Jodee Sedalnick* did a magnificent job pulling it all together. We had participation from 97.9 The Beat FM, who sent 2 of their DJs and a bunch of t-shirts and goodies for the children. We had Colleen Rickenbacher, a renowned author, talk to the children about etiquette and table manners. And Damascus, who subbed in for DJ Headcrack when he got sent to another gig, gave a motivational talk to the children and encouraged them to stay in school. Of course, we also were grateful to the Johnson’s for their generous donation of watches to the children and for attending the event. Overall, we reached 29 kids, all 5th and 6th graders, and we even got another article in the Dallas Morning News advertising the event.

Because of all of our efforts with City Park School, we received two awards from DISD. First, we received the Copper Award for our volunteer service hours. Then, we received recognition as a Finalist for the Outstanding Partner of the Year for all of DISD. These awards were also met with an article in the Dallas Morning News. In her nomination of our club, Ms. Enselek said: *“Altrusa has provided a constant source of dedicated service to our school, our teachers, our children, and our parents. They are constantly looking for ways that they can be of service to our school and our children.”* Ms. Yvonne Ramirez, a teacher for pre-K and adult English learners said: *“It has been a pleasure to have Altrusa as a partner of City Park Elementary. They have not only provided items such as uniforms and supplies for our students, but they have also given so much of their time and support to City Park students, parents, and staff.”* Thank you to everyone who made City Park Elementary School our signature project for so many years.

But, that isn't all we did this year! *Lili Feingold* spearheaded a fantastic Pet-O-Meals project this year, where we prepared meals for 85 pets of the meals-on-wheels recipients. *Phyllis Meyerson* led us in two visits to the Letot Center for troubled teenagers, where we held a Halloween party and a Christmas party. 50 children attended these two events. We also continued our mentoring efforts with Our Friends Place. We had 2 visits at the Transitional Living Center, educating the girls on fashion and finances. About 9 girls attended each visit, for a total impacted of 18.

We continued our work with our ASTRA club at Marsh Middle School, and began the process for establishing a new club at WT White High School. The Marsh ASTRA club continued to have good participation. Ms. Robinson told us that the club receives members only by recommendation of the teachers. It is a very prestigious and respected group. The ASTRA kids conducted a door decorating contest to promote cultural awareness. They also sponsored a canned food drive to benefit the North Texas Food Bank, collecting over 800 cans of food. Then, the ASTRA kids, with other school organizations, and teachers and parents spent a Saturday volunteering at the Food Bank. Overall, the Marsh ASTRA club impacted every student and teacher at the school, plus the families that benefited from their canned food drive.

For our International Projects, who could forget our wonderful Kitchen Shower benefiting Refugee Services of Texas? We gathered over 25 large bags of kitchen utensils and other items to benefit the refugees. It was estimated that our donations would help over 100 refugees.

The Vogel Alcove project continues our work with homeless children. We collected 200 “first books” for their library and helped provide \$750 of diapers and formula. Our efforts there was estimated to help approximately 300 people. And this was just a review of our service efforts.....

We also awarded 7 college scholarships – two of which went to international students, gave a person-to-person award, had 6 leadership development meetings to benefit our own club members, and raised money for next year.

In total, our club impacted over 4500 children and adults in the Dallas community during the previous club year. In addition, we spent over 2000 hours in service to the community as a club this year and a whopping 4400 hours of service as a whole!

Thank you all for your efforts on behalf of the club and for pulling together when it was needed. The colors of our rainbow were beautiful and absolutely awe-inspiring this year! Keep reaching for those rainbows.

Editor's note: The club was recognized for having an ABC box and and won the following awards at District Conference held in Amarillo April 20-22, 2007:

- *First Place – Newsletter Award for our fabulous Communiqué*
- *First Place – Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations*
- *Second Place – Yearbook Award*
- *First Place – Club Display Award*

In addition, the club won First Place in Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award at the International Convention held in Orlando July 12-16, 2007.

2006-2007

Michelle May selected “Altrusa¹: The Power of One” as her theme for this year. She found the following words inscribed on an angel ornament and thought they summed up what it meant to her to be an Altrusan.

*To the world, you are just one person,
But to one person, you could mean the world.*

In her acceptance, *Michelle* cited several examples of one person making a difference. Her goals for the year centered on that concept.

1. Each member to mean the work to just one person, on a monthly or bi-monthly basis through our service projects.
2. Publicity continue to be a main focus of our club.
3. Have success in recruiting new members, asking each member to invite one potential member to a meeting.
4. Present Power of One Award each month to the person who has best demonstrated the club theme during the previous month.

Michelle lived the theme by becoming the world to her new husband on July 2nd and becoming *Michelle May O’Neil*. The theme related to numbers, so the final report showed the numbers for each area in the club.

Communications Committee

Carolyn Swanson chaired the Communications Committee and played a vital role in the success of the club by acting as eMaster, keeping all members informed through 132 email bulletins. In addition, she published the *Communiqué* with 200 pages of information, including lots of pictures, and created the yearbook, complete with a small phone directory and a CD containing 13 important forms for the members use. *Beth McPherson* created the club display at Conference and lead the Long Range Strategic Planning committee, which updated our LRSP to take us into the future. *Paula Amschler* maintained and improved our fantastic website. *Carolyn Rash* continued to maintain the club history.

Publicity

Focusing on publicity was a main goal for this year, which surpassed even the most optimistic expectations. The numbers in this area are quite impressive: 29 articles in various publications, 13 websites, 4 stories on Fox 4 News; and 2354 radio mentions. Some of the specific information is listed below.

- *Dallas Morning News* articles
 - 2 articles in the main portion
 - 10 articles in the North Dallas Neighbors edition
 - 2 articles in the Park Cities Neighbors edition

- 2 articles in the Wylie edition
- 1 article in the Garland edition
- 1 article in the Quick edition
- Additional Publications
 - *Dallas Business Journal*
 - *People Paper*
 - *Plano Insider*
 - Dallas Area Paralegals' Association newsletter
 - Dallas Bar Association Family Law Section newsletter
 - Collin County Community college Culinary Arts' Student Association newsletter
 - Dallas ISD newsletter
 - Letot Juvenile Center newsletter
 - Our Friends' Place newsletter
 - JDC national newsletter
 - District Nine's newsletter – *News of Mighty Ninth*
 - *International Altrusan*
- Websites
 - DallasNews.com
 - Dfwinternational.com
 - KRLD.com
 - Altrusa.com
 - Altrusadistrictnine.org
 - Altrusadallas.org
 - K104FM.com
 - Cloudrecords.com
 - Djdrop.com
 - Catdaddymakeitstop.com
 - Dfwhiphop.com
 - JDC website

Service Committee

The Service Committee, chaired by *Frances Maloney*, was very busy. The projects helped our members perform over 2500 hours of community service. For our Make a Difference Day project, members renovated the Staff Lounge at the Vogel Alcove, a day care center for homeless children started by the Dallas Jewish Coalition. *Sandra Blassingame* continued our tradition of service with City Park Elementary School by providing the Altrusa Store, allowing the children to redeem tickets awarded by the teachers for school supplies. In addition, *Carolyn Harper* chaired our Social Skills Saturday at the school. The 4th and 5th graders learned table manners and other etiquette lessons from business etiquette expert Colleen Richenbacher, author of *Be On Your Best Business Behavior*. Fox 4 News correspondent Saul Garza and Distinguished Toastmaster Ernestina Pinones encouraged the children to stay in school.

Our international project provided 15 electronic dictionaries for women attending Unity University, Addis Abada, Ethiopia. We continued our 17-year partnership with Letot Juvenile Services by holding two events there. Sam Quatrocchi, director for the center, also presented a program at one of our meetings. At Our Friends Place, our focus was on teaching life skills to the women in transition. Michelle's husband, Chef John O'Neil, gave the young women budget conscious cooking lessons and fed them. Latricia's husband, Shawn Smith, taught them how to use tools. Both programs were well received, with requests for return performances. *Lili Feingold* facilitated our continued partnership with SPCA, providing Pet-O-Meals for the pets of the elderly that receive Meals on Wheels. We prepared 100 bags of pet food, treats and toys.

Our ASTRA members were busy this year, too, by making Teacher Appreciation Bags for the staff of Marsh Middle School and beginning the Pennies for Patients Project. In the Pennies project, ASTRA raised \$560 through a school-wide coin drive to fight cancer and provided a pizza party for the class that raised the most money in each grade level.

We started three new projects this year. We began a partnership with Scottish Rite Hospital, collecting magazines for their waiting rooms and trimming a Christmas tree. We had an ABC box donated by to our club by the Texarkana Altrusa Club. *Carolyn Rash* and her husband drove to Texarkana to get it.

Our biggest and most successful project was DUNK – Dallas Uniforms for Needy Kids. When President *Michelle* visited City Park Elementary School the previous year, she was moved by a little boy who stapled a paper collar to his t-shirt so he could stay in school. *Sandy May* chaired the project, which became the beneficiary of a basketball tournament sponsored by K104FM and Crest Auto Group, a charity golf tournament sponsored by the Family Law Section of the Dallas Bar Association, and a holiday luncheon sponsored by the Dallas Area Paralegals Association. This project also received a donation from Altrusa International, Inc. of DFW. Over \$13,000 was raised to provide a school uniform for every child attending City Park Elementary School and Frank Guzick Elementary School. The uniform consisted of a pair of khaki or navy pants, a long-sleeved white collared shirt, a short-sleeved white collared shirt, a belt and socks. We received donated books from Half Price Books, so that each child also received a book of their own to keep. Rose Lorenz, owner of American Outfitters, got her suppliers to slash their prices for our project, with one supplier gave each child a teddy bear. In all, 35 corporations and organizations partnered with us to make this project a huge success. Crest Auto Group lent us their marketing firm, which allowed us to get a lot of publicity for this project. Our efforts with the DUNK project culminated in our receipt of the Dallas ISD Copper Partner Award.

The numbers for all our service projects are:

- 6465 Service hours
- 5295 people in the community impacted by our service

- 35 partner organizations and corporations
- 2400 media hits reaching up to a million community citizens
- 7 supporting “Altrousers”
- 1 supporting Mom

Ways and Means

The Ways and Means chairs – *Angela Weber* and *Sidelle Illion* – got everyone motivated with the six G’s: Give or Get, Glitterati, Groceries, Grants, Gift Cards, and GoodSearch.com. The club was awarded a \$500 Grant for the DUNK project. The Give-or-Get-Omometer rose significantly as each member was encouraged to donate or solicit \$300 anytime during the year. Gift Cards were used to recognize family members’ birthdays or other significant events. Our Glitterati Boutique continued to grow and sharpened our focus of this signature fundraising project. The total raised through all the G events was over \$11,000.

Membership Committee

The Membership committee was chaired by *Lilly Andree*. It held two membership drives, including Add An Altrusan Day, two orientations, and a tour of the Women’s Museum in Fair Park. Through these efforts we increased membership by 18%. This committee presented 12 Power of One awards to the following members: June – *Phyllis Meyerson*; July – *Angela Weber*; August – *Lili Feingold*; September – *Carolyn Swanson*; October – *Carolyn Rash*; November – *Carolyn Harper*; December – *Ernestine Swanson*; January – *Sandy May*; February – *Latricia Stein*; March – *Susie Stephenson*; April – *Cheryl Keen*; and May – *Ellen Heffner*. This committee also participated with the District Nine Membership Committee in Women’s Visions Expo.

Editor’s note: The club was recognized for having an ABC box and a web site and won the following awards at District Conference held in Richardson April 18-20, 2008:

- *First Place – Newsletter Award for our fabulous Communiqué*
- *First Place – Yearbook Award*
- *Second Place – Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations*
- *Second Place – Edith DeBusk President’s Award*

2007-2008

The club theme for the 2007-2008 was “Building Bridges of Altrusa” throughout the Dallas Metroplex and beyond. President *Sidelle Illion* established the following goals for the year:

- Membership Bridge – 20% increase, as well as maintain current members;
- Service Bridge – a variety of different size projects: some with 100% participation, some with a few volunteers, all to provide personal choice;
- Communications Bridge – avoid breakdowns in communications along with a with high level of exchange and sharing of information;
- General Repair and Maintenance of our club bridge; and
- Team Work – it takes a team to build a bridge.

Another used one of her mother’s favorite taglines, “Put on your lipstick and deal with it”, to recognize members who contributed to the bridge building efforts of the club by awarding a lipstick each month. *Sidelle* stated in her address to the club that not only did this motto help her get through the year, but also gave her a deeper understanding of the true meaning of lipstick.

Membership Bridge

The membership goal of a 20% increase with retention of current members was aggressive. A number of members did not renew or relocated, which meant we started a little behind. We did gain three new members – *Cheryl Brown, Patti Parkinson, and Diana Jung*, plus three members returned to our club *Vicki Flannery, Jane Corley, and Brandy Baxter-Thompson*.

The Membership Committee, led by *Betty Lawson*, chaired three meetings, including our Add An Altrusan event, hosted two orientations, and wrote a variety of articles for the Communiqué. In addition, *Valeta Gentzler* led our competition for a “30 Second Elevator Speech”.

A club survey, which was prompted by the mid-year evaluation, recommended the following steps to repair our membership bridge:

1. Meetings needed to be compelling, involving all committee members; should provide variety of interesting and informative topics; and have both guest speakers and hands-on projects.
2. Every guest should be treated as a potential members, making them feel welcomed; follow-up after the meeting; and assign a mentor to new members in addition to their sponsor; and

3. Vary the location of the meetings occasionally.

Our meetings at Maudee's Cafe and Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children had the highest attendance for the year. President Sidelle emphasized the importance of sustaining and retaining our current membership, while bringing in new members, as the only way to grow our club.

Service Bridge

The Service Committee was chaired by *Shelley Traub*. They combined our Letot visit with Make a Difference Day by redoing Letot's Library and Art room over the course of two Saturdays. *Phyllis Meyerson* led the effort. Old art supplies and books were discarded and new art supplies purchased and organized. New books were obtained by an early morning trip to Half Price Book's donation center. We alphabetized and shelved all the old books and 700 new books, leaving a well stocked library. We provided 100 CDs, two recliner chairs, a table, and a lunch. We also provided a pizza lunch and our traditional Halloween party. This project involved 10 Altrusans and 100 service hours.

We rocked our socks doing our annual Vogel Alcove project. Chair *Angela Weber* and her 13 Rockin' Painters prepared, repaired and painted the nursery, transforming the room from old and dirty battleship gray to a dreamsicle orange with linen white trim in only five hours.

Our 5th annual Pet-O-Meal project stuffed 100 bags with dog and cat food /treats to be delivered to the homebound clients of the VNA Meals of Wheels project. In addition, several members participated in the stuffing peanut butter in kongs night and baking yummy pet treats in Shelly's kitchen.

DUNK was again a success. *Michelle O'Neal* focused on Frank Guzick Elementary School and delivered 2,262 articles of clothing valued at \$11,890.87. The club contributed \$9,100 of the costs, with the remaining donated by our valued vendor and contributor, Rose Lorenz.

We continued our relationship with Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, all spearheaded by *Sharron Vance*. At our August 7th meeting, we made ornaments for use on our tree, decorated by ten Altrusans in November. We hosted two hands-on craft projects with the kids and donated over 400 magazines for the waiting rooms. In appreciation, TSRHC hosted a fabulous evening for us, when we learned even more about the wonderful work they do.

Our Ninth Annual Social Skills Saturday was held May 10. Our guests were coached by *Shelley* about "meet and greet" techniques, then were treated to a personal and inspirational presentation by Dallas Mayor Pro Tem Dwaine Caraway, who spoke about respect and being a role model for younger children.

Colleen Richenbacker instructed all participants in proper table etiquette prior to multi-course meal catered by Highland Park Cafeteria.

Our international project came to light unexpectedly. We were able to ship 67 pairs of leather shoes to pre-school kids attending the Kieni P. Pre-School in Kabazi, Kenya, which allowed them to go onto public elementary school. Ms. Rose Lorenz, our DUNK supplier from American Outfitters, made the shoe vendor connection for us. The Foundation budget was amended to cover the additional shipping costs.

Our members gave more than 600 hours in community service, approximately 5000 member service hours and more than 300 hours for other volunteer hours. We gave seven scholarships benefitting area college students in various disciplines, and gave one \$500 person-to-person award. All of the service provided a strong service bridge.

Communications Bridge

Once again our Communications Chair, *Carolyn Swanson*, did a knock-out, award winning job as the Communiqué Editor, with 300 pages loaded with articles, information, facts, dates, instructions, directions, to-do's, not to's, and lots of photographs. Our newsletter was another great tool for any member. In addition, Carolyn sent about 300 e-blasts to keep us informed and in touch as needed. *Susie Stephenson* provided the yearbook. *Paula Amschler* continued as our webmaster. *Carolyn Hollingsworth* created the club exhibit for Conference and *Shelley Traub* did the scrapbook.

Finance Bridge

Guadalupe Carvajal and *Betsy Stephenson* were the fundraising co-chairs. The bigger and better Glitterati combined with the TV raffle, Al-Bay, and Miss Piggy Sue to net more than \$8000.

Everything Else

President Sidelle wasn't sure what light bulb went off when she introduced the President's Lipstick Award. It honored one of her mother's favorite sayings – "Put your lipstick on and deal with it". The first award recipient was easy – *Sue Powell* with her four decades of perfect attendance. She said that it became increasingly difficult after that first award to select the person, pick the right shade, coordinate the holder, and prepare the package. The other winners were:

President Sidelle shared the following acknowledgements and thanks at the end of her report:

- Eight members attended the Convention in Disneyworld;
- Eighteen members attended Conference in Richardson;

- Her Board for their support, hard work, and patience;
 - Parliamentarian *Frances Maloney*
 - Vice-President *Ellen Heffner*
 - Treasurer *Latricia Smith*
 - Assistant Treasurer *Sharron Vance*
 - Secretary *Sheryl Sclater*
 - Assistant Secretary *Valeta Gentzler*
 - Director *Sue Powell*
 - Director *Susie Stephenson*
 - Director *Elnora Coffin*
 - Director *Angela Weber*
 - Immediate Past President *Michelle May O'Neil*
 - President-Elect *Guadalupe Carvajal*

An excerpt from President Sidelle's report is shown below:

“ For a long time I was standing at the threshold of President's Bridge. It was long and narrow and wide and light and dark and high and low. But then I got it. I saw that I was nearly on the other side and looking back I saw the blueprint of what we accomplished this year. All of the bridges came together and it was not bad – not bad at all.

“I will miss being President to this distinguished club, but I could not have done it without you – not at all. I learned a lot; I've grown; learned to be more patient' KMS (keep mouth shut); not having the last word; a better listener; and either renewing or developing new friendships, to a name a few. It was a great journey and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It truly does take a team to build a bridge.”

Editor's note: The club was recognized for having an ABC box and a web site and won the following awards at District Conference held in Killeen April 17-19, 2009:

- *First Place – Newsletter Award for our Communiqué*
- *Second Place – Letha H. Brown/Governors' Literacy Award*

2008-2009

President *Guadalupe Carvajal* chose “It Takes Teamwork” as the club theme. The goals for the year were:

- Strengthen our signature service projects;
- Maintain and develop current members; building a solid base in which to strengthen numbers and value diversity;
- Strengthen and streamline current fundraising activities, so that we get the most revenue for our investments;
- Maintain the high quality of our award-winning *Communiqué*.

At the end of the year, President Guadalupe reflected on the accomplishments for the year by saying that the Dallas Team had a fantastic year. As a team, we helped our community in many ways and had some of the best programs with some of the best speakers ever. We faced some challenges from passing the budget to filling unexpected board vacancies, and we handled those challenges with professionalism, creativity, and always as a team!

Our Membership Team was led by *Cheryl Brown* and *Carolyn Hollingsworth*, who did a great job in answering all of the emails we received from potential members surfing the web. In fact, our first new members of club year 2008-2009, *Dee Parmer* and *Jackie Robertson* were doing just that when they sent us an email. *Carolyn Hollingsworth* responded by inviting them to a meeting. They hit the ground running, serving as the incoming Service Chair and Board Director. At the last meeting, we welcomed into our Altrusa team, *Rosemary Clowdus* and *Sabra Klein*.

The membership team also provided our members with two outstanding orientations for training for our members. We made great plans during our first orientation session hosted by *Sheryl Sclater*, President Elect. We discussed many innovative ideas around the table there and made plans to build the women in our club with teambuilding and leadership programs. Our second orientation was hosted by *Cheryl Keen* in her beautiful home and business. We had a fantastic turn out and we all shared what we learned in our leadership roles in Altrusa and what was great about being an Altrusan. This session was designed to help Altrusans understand expectations and duties of various roles when contemplating accepting a leadership role in Altrusa.

We started our club year with **37** members and after initiating 4 new members, we ended the year with 41 Altrusans; that’s an increase in membership of 10.81%. My goal was to maintain and develop current members and to increase membership by 4. We accomplished those goals.

The Service Team had an awesome year headed by team leader, *Sharron Vance*. Sharron led a fantastic team and kept us quite busy throughout the year. Service involved many projects including our Make a Difference Day

project. This year it combined Literacy month and Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. We donated funds to allow 30 children to be tested for dyslexia. We also put together handmade book marks for the teachers and students to use in their reading lab.

We also collected over 500 magazines for the Scottish Rite hospital's waiting room, and decorated a Christmas tree with our handmade ornaments to help make the hospital look festive for the children receiving treatment there.

We had two very special visits to Letot, a juvenile center for children. Led by Service Chair, *Phyllis Meyerson*, our first visit was the now famous "air-bobbing for apples" Halloween party. We Altrusans had just as much fun as the kids did. Our second trip to Letot was on Valentine's Day and the teenagers really enjoyed displaying their creative side by decoration valentine treats and cards.

The Vogel Alcove visits this year were headed by *Angela Weber* who coordinated two visits for Altrusans to help provide meals for the parent/teacher training night of this day care center for underprivileged children. She also coordinated a third visit to Vogel to help with a special teacher project of packing and moving items within the day care center. We also held a "baby shower" for Vogel during a meeting. Altrusans and guests donated diapers, baby-wipes, books, clothes, and other items for the day care center.

We also introduced a new project this year – The Early CLASS. This educational effort helps teach children with Autism to communicate more effectively and teaches them why it is so important to communicate. We made a donation that assisted a family in paying a portion of the tuition cost to send their child to this special class that is the only one of its kind in the nation.

Vickie Flannery organized a great Social Skills Saturday City Park Elementary school. She brought back Colleen Rickenbacher, author of "Be on Your Best Behavior" to provide an energetic, interactive, and motivating presentation on social skills. The 29 fourth and fifth grade students along with 11 Altrusans and two school teachers benefited from this program. *Cheryl Brown*, Membership Chair, gave a great inspirational talk on the importance of staying in school. *Sandra Blassingame* headed the Dallas Uniforms for Needy Kids (DUNK) effort. She was able to acquire additional donations above our budgeted amount and a \$1000 grant from International to help provide 400 uniforms for City Park Elementary School students.

We provided Officer Steve, police officer from the Dallas Police Department, with a very special bicycle for his use in patrolling his downtown route. His route also includes the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital. It was a pleasure to be able to provide this much needed item to the City of Dallas. *Karen Wise* coordinated the donation from the Ruth Behrens Fund for Crime Prevention.

We again provided support for our ASTRA club at Marsh Middle School under the direction of *Brandy Baxter-Thompson*.

Shelly Traub organized a great SPCA Pet-o-Meals project this year. Under her capable leadership, we managed to fill over 100 gift bags with dog and cat food, treats and toys for the precious pets of the folks receiving meals-on-wheels.

Our International project was led by *Valeta Gentzler*. She arranged for us to see and understand a little more about the “Lost Girls of Sudan.” We were fortunate to have a “lost girl” visit our club and talk about her experiences escaping the atrocities of her country. We were honored to make a donation to the cause, which was used to purchase two laptops for two “lost girls” attending Richland College. The donation was the largest single donation made to this organization to date.

We held a book drive for the children and families helped by Literacy Instruction for Texas (LIFT). We also made a donation to this group to help defray the costs of stamping out literacy in Texas.

All of these service projects required time, money, energy, and dedication by all team members. In terms of time, our team spent over 882 hours in service to our community; over 1517 hours in service to our club; and 525 hours of volunteer service to projects outside of Altrusa. We averaged 34.3 hours of service per member. My goal was to strengthen our signature projects and to fill unmet needs in the community. We strengthened our DUNK and Letot projects and began a new project for children with autism. We met those goals.

The Communication Team, led by *Jan Howell*, really broke new ground. *Paula Amschler* revamped our web page and newsletter, the award winning Communiqué. The new web page looked great. President Guadalupe was its first blogger, in which she shared information and thoughts in real time. The newsletter delivered great information to our members. Our eMaster sent “eBlasts” as news and information was made available. We all received news of members, service activities, meetings, District and International news, and all other club news on a flow basis and as needed. This team has worked hard to ensure all team members were well informed. Various members submitted news articles to various local media outlets. Altrusa made it to the *Dallas Morning News*’ NeighborsGo section of the paper, the Dallas Police Department’s newsletter, and various other media outlets. This team continued to look for new ways of share news with each other and with the public. My goal was to maintain the high quality of our newsletter and communications. We surpassed that goal by revamping our web page and adding a president’s blog to keep our members informed.

The Finance Team was led by *Shelley Traub* and *Phyllis Meyerson* and did a great job! *Sheryl Sclater* was our Ways and Means Chair. *Lili Feingold* led

a fantastic Glitterati Team that put together a successful “Holiday Boutique” that included local vendors of handmade wares, original art pieces, and other hard-to-find and on-of-a-kind products. We also raised funds from Al-Bay, our silent auctions at meetings, and from gift cards – donations made to Altrusa in memory and honor of loved ones. We raised around \$7000 for next year’s projects. My finance goal was to strengthen our primary fund raising project and we did just that. Glitterati was bigger and better than ever and in position to bring in even more revenue next year.

All of our Teams put together some of the most fantastic **programs**. Our programs focused on the service projects and with building our members. These “building” programs included programs such as “recruiting potential members” presented by Kim Cummings, Director of Employee Relations at Belo, and “how to target potential members” presented by Jeff Klein of Klein Creative. These two presenters shared ideas on how to bring members into our club that have similar goals. Other programs were quite eye-opening and informative such as the program that informed us of the “Lost Girls of the Sudan” presented by Dr. Anne Worth and Beverly Parkhurst Moss, author of “Dark Exodus: The Lost Girls of Sudan.” All of our programs for the year were informative, educational, and helped to build women. As you know, Altrusa is a builder of women, and we in the Dallas Club did just that!

All of this hard work and special efforts were accomplished by the members of the best Altrusa Team in District Nine (per President Guadalupe). She also shared some personal thanks shown below.

- **Sidelle** for providing support and guidance.
- **Frances** for being parliamentarian
- **Maxie** for being Program Coordinator, keeping a “roof” over all of our heads, and working hard to make our meetings as comfortable as possible
- **Shelley** for not giving up even when faced with challenges
- **Phyllis** for keeping the Foundation books and offering all of your guidance
- **Sharron** for pulling double duty as assistant secretary and Service Chair
- **Angela** for putting together some really terrific programs
- **Lana** for returning to an active role in Altrusa this year
- **Susie Stephenson** for providing so much support and guidance behind the scenes
- **Valeta** for the installation and serving as secretary
- **Sheryl Sclater** for always being willing to do whatever needed to be done and for carrying a dual role; President Elect and Ways and Means Chair.

- **Frances, Carolyn Rash, Aunt Sue, Betty, Valeta, Karen, Phyllis, Anne,** and **Sidelle** for serving as my mentors with all of the guidance and support you gave me;
- **Team Dallas** for attending all of the meetings, working on the service projects to help make our community a better place in which to live, and for being the glue that keeps this team together.

Editor's note: The club was recognized for having an ABC box and a web site and won the following awards at District Conference held in Lubbock April 9-11, 2010:

- *First Place – Yearbook Award*
- *Second Place – Club Communications Award*
- *Third Place – Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award*

2009-2010

President *Sheryl Sclater* chose “Let the sun shine in!” for her club theme. From *Sheryl's* report to the club at the end year, the club's accomplishments were:

Membership Development: This committee was lead by *Brandy Baxter-Thompson* with Vice Chair *Lana Ford-Carpenter*. *Paula Amschler* as an unofficial membership leader, quickly passed along any inquiries online to our Membership Development chairs. We had several inquiries online, as well as people bringing their friends and co-workers to our meeting to introduce them to our Club. We added one member this year, *Lara Thompson*, and started working immediately with enthusiasm and compassion and instantly became valuable member.

The committee held two membership orientations during the year. One was held at La Madeleine for a breakfast meeting. The other one was held at *Cheryl Keen's* house, where her husband gave a tour of his fine motor vehicles he restores to original sheen.

Service: Lead by *Dee Parmer*, the Service committee thrived this year. Every single member pitched in to make this a wonderful service year. *Dee* brought us all together by making announcements each meeting and making sure everyone had dates and times, and passing around sign-up sheets so everyone could get involved. A total of **2,634 hours** were performed and **\$1,210.49 donated** by our members.

Our annual Halloween party at Letot took on a different shape this year as Make A Difference Day was combined with a literacy project. *Phyllis Meyerson* took the reigns and sent us on a journey to Letot. What an adventure it was. Twenty volunteers worked on five different internal projects. The morning shift brought in art supplies for the Art room, and cleaned, organized and decorated cabinets. Also, books (and a book case was put together for the books), puzzles, and games were donated and bought for the children of the visiting families to use while sitting in the Waiting Room. A small TV and DVD were purchased, too. The Stars Room, a room used to reward good behavior of the youth, got a redo. *Shelley Traub* decorated the cabinets and made them “pop” and *Sidelle Illion* donated movie posters from Blockbuster. A rug and furniture were brought in, and the room was rearranged. The staff bulletin board was decorated with bright colors and designs to draw attention to important postings. All this activity was followed by an outstanding Halloween party, including bobbing apples, pumpkin decorating with lots of different art supplies, and snacks for the children consisting of candy, cookies, chips, dips and drinks. What a blast! Our second visit to Letot was very successful, too, as *Shelley* taught the children how to make jewelry, and snacks were served to the children.

The Vogel Alcove visit this year was coordinated by *Angela Weber* and consisted of a choice of playing Santa Clause with the parents or wrapping presents. *Sidelle* brought in lots and lots of cool clothing for the parents to choose from as they made their selections. President *Sheryl* was one of those who got to play Santa Clause and walk the parents through choices of clothing, toys and books for each of their small children. Each parent she served found just exactly what their child wanted, be it a Barbie doll, a train, a book about Sesame Street, stuffed animals, or socks and underwear with the child's favorite character on it. You could see the joy on the parents' faces and hear the happiness in their voices as they gathered.

We had two projects that consisted of checks to help out our favorite organizations, one being Scottish Rite and the other, the Early CLASS. Speakers from both organizations came to a meeting to inform our members about the organization, and then were presented a check.

Karen Wise presented the Dallas Child Advocacy Center to our Club via a speaker. Although it was not an "official" club sponsored project, many members donated items to the DCAC for the children to use. Karen also presented a check to DCAC from the Ruth Behrens Fund.

Lili Feingold led the International Day festivities by introducing our Club to Spoons for Darfur. She brought in one of her students from her school to speak with us, then everyone either sanded or painted spoons to sell in order to raise funds to buy solar ovens for families in Darfur. These ovens prevent the women of the families from having to leave the camp for firewood and being exposed to acts of violence.

Shelley Traub headed up our "pet" project by hauling hundreds of pounds of cat and dog food from the store, to her house, to the second floor where our meeting took place. After listening to delightful speakers speak about rescue animals, members filling bags of food, toys and treats for animals.

DUNK uniforms lived on through the efforts of *Sandra Blassingame*. She contacted the City Park Elementary school to find out what sizes of uniforms were needed this year, and then placed the order and separated the uniforms per child, along with a book. We received many lovely notes from the recipients.

Our support of the ASTRA club waned this year to due an illness of the school sponsor. The club planned to get the club up and running again next year.

Planning, coordinating, and implementation of each of these projects took a great amount of time and energy on the part of the leader, and the part of each member who participated in a positive outcome. President *Sheryl* thanked each and every one who participated in the service projects.

Communication: Lead by *Susie Stephenson*, this group did an outstanding job of condensing communications and getting things placed on the web for not only our club to enjoy, but prospective members interested in what our club represents. Some mighty fine meeting bulletins were created during the first few months by *Beth Blair* with vast amounts of information and distributed to our members. Beth also came up with our fabulous design for the newsletters. *Carolyn Rash* was right on top of things with eBlasts. The word got out right away to members about changes, news of members, meeting news, etc. *Paula Amschler* was always immediately available, and very responsive if an email was sent to our club. Great job communications!

Finance: *Phyllis Meyerson* and *Carolyn Hollingsworth* brought a whole new meaning to the word efficiency and customer service this year. They always came prepared and ready to serve, making the financial reports ready on time. *Ways and Means*, lead by *Sidelle Illion*, worked hard organizing our fundraising activities. *Dee* and *Sidelle* led the pack with the informative announcements made at each meeting. None of us had an excuse of “not knowing”. She approached the assignment as one of a Project Manager, and was very thorough. The biggest money raiser, *Glitterati*, was led by one *Lili Feingold*. What a lovely lady, and one who gave so much of her time to really put on a show.

President *Sheryl* thanked *Frances Maloney* and *Aunt Sue Powell*, for sponsoring her and making me a part of such a wonderful group of women who touch my life every day and for their support during her Presidency – *Aunt Sue* with her “Did you remember....?” and *Frances* with her “Say it like this...” help.

She thanked her Board, who so willingly volunteered and shifted positions when the going got tough and their dedication and hopefulness.

In addition to those members mentioned, she thanked *Guadalupe Carvajal* and *Valeta Gentzler* for their support.

Excerpts from President *Sheryl's* report are shown below:

“What a fun year I have had with everyone. I felt like a deer caught in the headlights at the beginning, but thanks to my exuberant Vice President, *Anne Reed*, I really got my act together. She took me by the hand and showed me what I needed to make things right in leadership. She emailed me, called me, had lunch with me, anything she needed to do to get me on track, *Anne* was there to help out. Her suggestions during those first months were invaluable. My entire Board has done a wonderful job and I so appreciate everybody's help with the little, and the big, things that made the year such a success. *Angela Weber*, thank you for all the little things you do, like making the place cards we used at the head table every meeting. Although not all of my goals were met, we

enjoyed participation by a large number of our members for a great deal of our projects. Although there have been a few bumps in the road, the year has been mostly made up of smooth sailing.

“We let the sun shine in on so many different lives through our labors. We touched people’s lives that we will never meet. People we will never know, who reaped the benefits of our generosity and kindness. Take a look around at the friends you have sitting in this room. It is our hearts that keep bringing us back. It is our souls that yearn to do more, help more, and mend more, that makes us such willing contributors to this group. I want to thank each one of you who made a difference, through your works and monies, to touch lives you will never know. I am proud and honored to have served you as a leader during the past year.”

Editor’s note: The club won the following awards at District Conference held in Dallas April 29-May1, 2011:

- *Second Place – Yearbook Award*
- *Third Place – Club Display Award*

Presidents during this decade were:

<i>Carolyn Swanson</i>	2000-2001
<i>Ailsa Lewis</i>	2001-2002
<i>Beth McPherson</i>	2002-2003
<i>Paula Jo Amschler</i>	2003-2004
<i>Phyllis Meyerson</i>	2004-2005
<i>Ruth Muller</i>	2005-2005
<i>Michelle May O’Neil</i>	2005-2007
<i>Sidelle Illion</i>	2007-2008
<i>Guadalupe Carvajal</i>	2008-2009
<i>Sheryl Sclater</i>	2009-2010