



Altrusa International District Four Service Bulletin

As we enter this season of gratitude and light, I am reminded of how much we have to be thankful for within our Altrusa family. This time of year invites us to pause, reflect, and appreciate the friendships, service, and shared purpose that bind us together.

The Christmas season also brings moments of tenderness. In recent months, we have said goodbye to several beloved Altrusans whose dedication and spirit enriched our clubs and our communities. We hold their memories close and honor the legacy they leave behind.

Let us also keep in our thoughts the members who are currently facing health challenges or personal hardships. The holidays can magnify both joy and difficulty, and I know our District will continue to surround one another with compassion, encouragement, and strength.

May this season bring peace to your heart, comfort where it is needed, and renewed inspiration for the service we share. I am grateful for each of you, and proud of the kindness and leadership you bring to District Four.

Warmest wishes,
Malia Wyatt
District Four Governor

Ps – please read this DSB edition carefully for updated award submission requirements for the 2026 awards at conference!



District Four Officers and Board 2025-27 Biennium

Malia Wyatt - Governor

Clarksville, Tennessee

931-206-5178

malia.wyatt@gmail.com

Pam Grantham -

Governor Elect

Jack, Alabama

334-671-4783

pgrantham1869@gmail.com

Leia Duhaime -

1st Vice Governor

Enterprise, Alabama

334-494-7249

leiajh329@gmail.com

Bobbie McLaren -

2nd Vice Governor

Fort Payne, Alabama

256-996-4269

bmclaren2011@gmail.com

Melinda Dill - Director

Nashville, Tennessee

615-504-2234

mkd1029@comcast.net

Christine Walters - Treasurer

Fort Payne, Alabama

256-630-2583

christine.w823@gmail.com

Joy Vaughn - Secretary

Clarksville, Tennessee

931-552-2988

jbvaughn1@yahoo.com

Jennifer Gatlin-

Immediate Past Governor

Jack, Alabama

334-372-5817

jenniferdflowers@yahoo.com

Halfway There: District Four's Mid-Year Board Meeting Recap

Mid-Year Board Meeting Recap by Pam Grantham, Governor-Elect

The Mid-Year Board Meeting marked the halfway point to the 2026 Altrusa District Four Conference, which will be held in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, at the TownePlace Suites.

At the end of September, the District Four Board traveled to Oak Ridge to meet with the Conference Committee, tour the venue, and take care of a little business. Samantha Berven, Conference Chair, along with Committee Members Jenna Watson and Wendie Aurin, presented exciting details about the upcoming Conference— including the theme, activities, and proposed budget.

District Business Updates

After the Conference discussion, the Board moved on to District business.

Membership was a key topic, as two clubs are currently below Charter Strength and two are holding steady at Charter Strength. As of the meeting date, Group Tally reported 347 total members, which includes Active, Emeritus, Dual, Young Adult, and Lifetime categories. Additionally, three new Emeritus applications were approved.

International Updates

Governor Malia Wyatt provided updates from Altrusa International.

International President Christine DeVlieger's biennium theme is "Love, Literacy, and Legacy." The literacy challenge initiated by Past International President Kathy Folley will continue— with an even greater goal: a donation of 1,000,001 books during this term.

President DeVlieger also continues to champion Days for Girls, challenging each member to contribute \$25.00 toward the effort. Excitingly, President Christine will attend the District Four Conference in Oak Ridge.

Another update from International included the transformation of Club 21 into Club 52. Since 1998, Club 21 funds have supported children's camps; due to rising costs, the contribution level has been adjusted. Charter membership for Club 52 remains open through April 2026, with individual and club memberships available. Club membership is set at \$252.00.

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Past Governors Council and Foundation

Highlights

Governor Wyatt also shared updates on behalf of Immediate Past Governor Jennifer Gatlin, who was unable to attend. The Past Governors Council has revised the Lola Culver Fundraising Award—members are encouraged to review the updated award criteria for details.

As Governor-Elect and Ex-Officio member of the District Four Foundation, I was pleased to share Foundation updates. Starting with, September marked the 15-year anniversary of the District Four Foundation! To celebrate, the Foundation has launched a quarterly newsletter highlighting clubs that have received past grants and promoting the STAR Giving Program. Beginning this year, the Foundation will increase grant awards from \$1,000 to \$1,500. STAR contributions should be sent to Mary Larson, and electronic fund transfers are also accepted. A follow-up report is required for all awarded grants.

Workshops and Additional Business

Due to several logistical issues surrounding the Fall Workshop, the Board voted to hold a series of Virtual Workshops instead. The first session took place on Sunday, November 2, 2025, led by Governor Wyatt, with additional sessions to be announced soon.

Other business items included reports from the Membership and Service Chairs, a review of future conference schedules, and updates to the District Board Manuals.

A Strong Start to the Second Half

All in all, it was a productive and encouraging meeting—setting a positive tone as we move toward Oak Ridge.



District Four Committee Chairs 2025-27 Biennium

Archives Liason

Teresa Travis

Nashville, Tennessee

615-832-8785

ttravis6116@gmail.com

ASTRA Committee Chair

Cheryl O'Mary

Enterprise, Alabama

334-301-3167

omary32@yahoo.com

BRR - Bylaws

Resolutions & Recommendations

Carolyn Robinson

Thibodaux, Louisiana

225-939-8057

carolyn.robinson1951@yahoo.com

Communications Committee Chair

Laura Tolbert

Etowah County, Alabama

256-504-5722

lollylee61@yahoo.com

District Service Bulletin (DSB) Editor

Wendie Aurin

Oak Ridge, Tennessee

865-567-6092

wendieaurin@gmail.com

International Foundation Liason

Jennifer Amlong

Jack, Alabama

334-735-3300

jenamlong@aol.com

**District Four
Committee Chairs
2025-27 Biennium**

**Leadership Development
Committee Chair**

Jennifer Gatlin

Jack, Alabama
334-372-5817

jenniferdflowers@yahoo.com

**Membership Development
Committee Chair**

Raikes Anne McCrary

Nashville, Tennessee
615-337-7343

raikesanne@gmail.com

New Club Building Chair

Theresa Sanders

Clarksville, Tennessee
931-218-8319

wonderta@aol.com

Parliamentarian

Susie Quillen

Kingsport, Tennessee
423-967-1600

squillen123@gmail.com

Service Committee Chair

Samantha Berven

Oak Ridge, Tennessee
865-356-5411

sroberven@gmail.com

Webmaster

Sydney Gilley

Enterprise, Alabama
334-494-7254

sidneygilley@gmail.com

Life Lessons from a Pencil



Here are five powerful lessons we can learn from a simple pencil – and how they connect to Altrusa's mission

- **STAY SHARP:** A pencil must be sharpened to be useful. Our challenges as Altrusans sharpen us and prepare us for greater impact.
- **VALUE WHAT'S INSIDE:** The true worth of a pencil is in its core. In Altrusa, it's the compassion and generosity inside each member that makes the difference.
- **FORGIVE AND START FRESH:** A pencil comes with an eraser. Mistakes happen, but in Altrusa, we help people rewrite their stories through literacy, service and support.
- **LEAVE YOUR MARK:** Every pencil stroke leaves a trace. Every act of service leaves a lasting mark of hope and change in our communities.
- **BE GUIDED BY PURPOSE:** A pencil needs a guiding hand. Altrusa is guided by our mission and values, allowing us to write stories of transformation together.

Together, like pencils in the hands of the writer, Altrusans are writing a story of service, hope, and impact.

**A Message from District Four Director
Melinda Dill**

When I first joined Altrusa seven years ago, I jumped in wholeheartedly, attending the fall workshop just a few months later, followed by conference in April and convention in July. Those experiences cemented my commitment to being an Altrusan for life. I now never want to miss any opportunity to gather with my fellow Altrusans at workshops, conferences, and conventions.

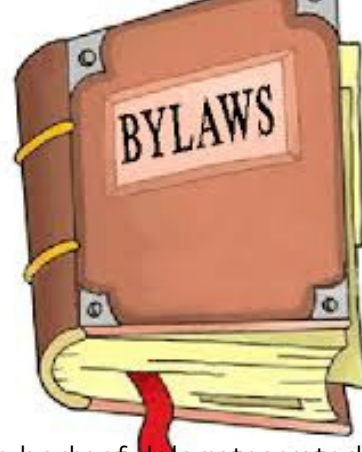
I genuinely believe that engaging beyond monthly club meetings profoundly enriches a member's perspective. Initially, I approached each event with the mindset of gathering ideas to bring back to my home club. But since joining the District Four board, my view has expanded. I now see Altrusa through a District-wide lens, focused on how we can collectively foster growth through strong leadership, increased membership, and impactful service projects. Together, we are better. Surrounded by so many passionate, enthusiastic, like-minded, service-driven members, we make a meaningful difference—not only in our local communities but also on a broader scale through our contributions, ideas, and unwavering commitment to the aims of Altrusa.

I look forward to the journey ahead on the District Board. I know it will be a time of growth, learning, and deeper connection as I continue to evolve as an Altrusan.

*Melinda Dill
District Four Director*



A Message from Carolyn Robinson, Chair Bylaws, Resolutions, and Recommendations



At our 2025 Altrusa International Convention in Quebec, the body of delegates voted to amend our International/District/Local Club bylaws to include verbiage concerning our young adult members. The Young Adult Member category was a policy change that had already been implemented so the bylaws needed to be amended to reflect this addition.

These changes do not require additional approval from the District as they are automatically approved.

International BRR Chair Brenda Smith has asked that ALL clubs in District Four update their bylaws. To accomplish this task, you can insert the text in red below to make the changes necessary:

Section 1. Members

The members shall include persons who are Active, **Young Adults**, Emeritus, Honorary and Life members.

Section 3. Young Adult Members

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

The current Section 3 - Emeritus Members - becomes **Section 4**.

The current Section 4 - Honorary Members - becomes **Section 5**.

If you don't have or can't locate the most recent copy of your bylaws, there's no need to panic. Now is a good time to download the Club Bylaws Word document that you will find on our Altrusa International website under GOVERNANCE. Then, modify it with your club's particular bylaw information (i.e., name, meetings, BOD composition/tenure). Voila, you are totally up to date.

Please let me know that you have completed this task by sending me the updated copy of your bylaws (either Word or pdf version) via email (carolyn.robinson1951@yahoo.com) for the District records, and rest assured that they will be in safekeeping for the next time we amend our bylaws. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Sincerely in Altrusa,
Carolyn Robinson, Chair
Bylaws, Resolutions, and Recommendations*



Thriving Altrusa Clubs know that their members want:

- to improve our communities through regular hands-on service
- to get to know one another and have fun and fellowship together
- to be allowed to share our ideas, actively contribute, and be treated with respect
- flexibility to participate as our age, health and schedule permits, and acceptance of whatever that level of involvement is

Providing a mentor is an important factor in welcoming and retaining active members. Make new members feel valued from the start by providing a warm welcome. Assign a mentor by pairing new members with experienced ones to create a dedicated point of contact for questions and guidance. Acknowledge and celebrate new members' contributions, such as through a shout-out in a newsletter or on social media.

Together, We Grow Through Service and Mentoring

As a mentor, "Connection" is a key component for a strong mentoring relationship, including purposeful interactions, where both parties feel heard and understood. Focus on support of your club's new members. Identify ways to help orient and engage them. Help new members to connect with people, projects, committees, and club traditions. Let them learn the joy of service.

Club leadership should actively encourage new members to share ideas-- and then try to implement some. Be open to new ways. Plan fun events and social activities that unite your members and allow them to get to know one another better outside of a meeting. The Oak Ridge, TN club has a formal mentoring program. Their mentor is called the Navigator. This role is separate from the sponsor. Sometimes the sponsor is a relatively new member also and may not have the answers, or may not have the time to work with the new member. The Navigator is someone who wants to be a mentor and has the Altrusa experience and time. The Navigator receives a list of suggestions of things to do to build a sense of belonging and shared purpose.

One Altrusan mentor tells the new member to call her for "the meeting after the meeting," where she can respond to questions and give context about items in the meeting.

The Altrusa International website (under the Leadership tab) has information on mentoring and member retention. REMEMBER you can also use your District Membership Chair and International Membership Committee members as resources.

*Raikes Anne McCrary
District Four Membership Development Chair*

**District Four
Club Presidents
2025-26**

**Alabama
Anniston**

Peggy Grubbs

256 225-3690

peggygrubbs@mail.com

Enterprise

Leia Duhaime

334-494-7249

leiajh329@gmail.com

Etowah County

Laura Tolbert

256-504-5722

lollylee61@yahoo.com

Fort Payne/Dekalb

Bobbie McLaren

256-996-4269

bmclaren2011@gmail.com

Greater Gadsden

Belinda Hiti

256-622-0722

belindahiti@gmail.com

Jack

Britley Parker

334-300-6974

mikebritkin@hotmail.com

Louisiana

Baton Rouge

Amy Drago

225-803-5467

Adrago2019@gmail.com

Thibodaux

Cliff Allen

214-886-5798

cliffallen.altrusa@gmail.com

**District Four
Club Presidents
2025-26**

**Mississippi
Greenwood
Whitney Avritt**
662-299-1376

whitneyavritt@gmail.com

**Tennessee
Clarksville**

Jackie Adams
931-338-7487

jknaide@yahoo.com

Kingsport

Kristy Dennison
276-346-6349

kristydennison1@gmail.com

Nashville

Lynette Brown
941-773-9040

tobeaudrey@gmail.com

Oak Ridge

Jane Palmer
865-482-4809

palmerjf@comcast.net

**Altrusa International
of Clarksville, Tennessee
New member spotlight**



My name is Brina Sears and I joined Altrusa in March of 2025 after moving to Tennessee. I have a wonderful husband, two step children, a cat and dog. I love painting, sewing and crafting. I recently started learning the art of sourdough baking, my cultures name is Cruella Dough Vil. I'm a Registered Veterinary Technician with a passion for shelter medicine. I was one fortunate enough travel across state lines to rescue 30 dogs from an overcrowded facility in Texas. I'm excited to see where the future takes me.



Spotlight on District Four Awards

The Judy Atkinson Presidents Award

The Judy Atkinson's President Award is designed to encourage the development of leaders to achieve their maximum potential in service. Each club may submit an application, however no president may win two consecutive years.

The applicant should:

- ~Demonstrate exemplary participation in community service activities
- ~Utilize the strategic planning process
- ~Recruit and retain members actively
- ~Utilize strong leadership development
- ~Display superior activity in wide range of Foundation programs

The deadline to submit entries is February 14, 2026.

Please send entries to
Immediate Past Governor Jennifer Gatlin
30709 Highway 87, Troy, AL 36079
jenniferdflowers@yahoo.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx>

The Lola Culver Fundraising Award

The Lola Culver Fundraising Award was established in September 2024 to honor District Four's first Governor and to recognize outstanding fundraising projects, the hallmark of what Altrusa clubs are known for in their communities. Lola Culver of Nashville, TN, presided over District Four's first annual conference in Biloxi, MS, October 28-30, 1955.

The Lola Culver Fundraising Award will be presented annually by the District Four Past Governors Council to a District Four club.

Entries must be emailed or postmarked by February 14, 2026 and sent to Immediate Past Governor Jennifer Gatlin
30709 Highway 87, Troy, AL 36079
jenniferdflowers@yahoo.com

Please see the application for more details and information.

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx>



Spotlight on District Four Awards

Outstanding Altrusan Award

One of the hardest tasks that for a District Governor is having to select the recipients of the Outstanding Altrusan Award! It is always overwhelming with gratitude for Presidents to submit their nominees.

The criteria for the award reads, in part:

Every club has members who give willingly of their time and talents in service to Altrusa. These members make a lasting contribution to our organization as well as their communities. District Four Club Presidents may nominate only one member each year to be honored at District Conference, on the District Four Facebook page, The Call to Conference and/or in subsequent District Service Bulletins. Your nominee should be a hardworking individual who is committed to club projects and club leadership. Your nominee could also be your go-to person for advice or the one who other members look up to.

The entry must be composed of 300 words or less regarding the nominee's participation and why the member is nominated. Additionally, nominations must include how this Altrusan has demonstrated leadership and made a difference to Altrusa. Altrusans are eligible to receive this honor only one time but may be nominated again if they were not selected in a previous year.

Entries are due by February 14, 2026, and may be sent to:

Malia Wyatt, Governor

331 Union St, Suite B, Clarksville, Tn 37040

Malia.Wyatt@gmail.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx>



Spotlight on District Four Awards

Mamie L Bass Service Award

Our first International President, Mamie L. Bass, was passionate about service. She firmly believed in the idea that “Altrusa believes it is not enough to be good; Altrusa must be good for something.” This award was originally named the Community Service Award but was renamed in her honor by the International Board of Directors in 1975. Altrusa has, from its very first days, been actively involved in working to better our communities. Indeed, our tag line “Leading to a better community” emphasizes this point. We all know that working within our communities is essential to our continued success. It shows others that we are not just a fund raising group of “ladies who lunch”. No disrespect to our male members – I am using the analogy simply to make my point and distinguish us from other groups who, quite frankly, do just that. As Altrusans we are more than willing to make each dollar do the work of two if not three or more. This award recognizes clubs that do just that. Every project we do has relevance to our local community in some way or another. It may be a literacy project, in which case clubs can choose whether to submit for the Mamie L. Bass OR the Letha H. Brown award (they can not use the same project for both). Regardless, it involves service in a meaningful way, and every Altrusa club is doing this! There is no question in my mind that every single Altrusa club can and should be entering for this award. Please do not pre judge your entry. It is not about who spends the most money, or who gets the splashy headlines. It is about our CORE VALUE as Altrusans, and how we have impacted our community. Please check the Altrusa International website at www.altrusa.org for the award entry forms and criteria for your award submission. The deadline for entry is February 14, 2026.

I strongly encourage EVERY club to enter for this award and I look forward to seeing the awesome work you have done.

Entries may be sent to:

Bobbie McLaren

147 County Rd 9073, Fort Payne, AL 35967

bmclaren2011@gmail.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx>



Spotlight on District Four Awards

Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award

Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun, a charter member of Altrusa International of Dallas, TX, Inc., joined the organization in 1928 and went on to serve two terms as President of Altrusa International from 1941 to 1945. During her presidency, Dr. Calhoun emphasized the international dimension of our organization. In 2003, Altrusa International established the “Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award” in her memory.

Each Altrusa Club can submit one international service project for consideration each year. An international service project is defined as one that directly benefits individuals and/or communities outside the national borders of the Altrusa Club. In our District, this includes projects that support areas beyond the United States of America.

We encourage each club to submit their International service projects for judging. It's a wonderful opportunity to showcase what your club is doing outside of our area and to help other clubs gain ideas and motivation. By sharing our international service projects, we can inspire one another, learn from each other's experiences, and demonstrate the global impact of Altrusa International. Your club's unique project could spark creativity, provide valuable insights, and motivate other clubs to expand their international service efforts.

Please check the Altrusa International website at www.altrusa.org for the award entry forms and criteria for your award submission. The deadline to submit entries is February 14, 2026.

Entries may be sent to:

Leia Duhaime

214 Aaron Dr, Enterprise, AL 36330

Leia.duhaime@gmail.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx>



Spotlight on District Four Awards

Letha H. Brown Literacy Award

The Letha H. Brown Literacy Award is given in honor of Letha H. Brown who established literacy as a major emphasis of Altrusa International in 1977. The objectives of this award are to stimulate interest in developing active literacy projects in your community, create an awareness of Altrusa and its commitment to literacy, encourage members in your clubs to actively participate in literacy projects and to recognize outstanding Club achievement in service to your communities.

Remember, your pictures, etc, can not exceed 6 pages.

Good luck to you! We look forward to seeing the wonderful things you are doing in your communities related to literacy!

The deadline to submit entries is February 14, 2026.

Entries may be sent to:

Samantha Berven

104 Belle Creek Dr, Oak Ridge, Tn 37830

sroberven@gmail.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx>

ASTRA AWARD

(Deadline is March 1, 2026)

Send Entry to:

Cheryl O'Mary

113 Autumn Way

Enterprise, AL 36330

Omary32@yahoo.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx/folder/244929899509>





Spotlight on District Four Awards

AWARDS AND CONFERENCE DEADLINE SCHEDULE

AWARD SUBMISSIONS DUE MARCH 1, 2026:

BEST CLUB NEWSLETTER

Submit three (3) editions for a total of nine (9) newsletters published during the current membership year (June 1, 2026 – May 31, 2026).

Wendie Aurin

110 Windham Rd

Oak Ridge, TN 37830

dfdsbeditor@gmail.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx/file/1419328434885>

BEST CLUB YEARBOOK

Submit three (3) copies of your current club yearbook to:

Laura Tolbert

3150 Fairview Rd

Gadsden, AL 35904

Lollylee61@yahoo.com

Physical copies of your yearbook will not be returned – unless otherwise coordinated with the judge.

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx/file/1419328434885>

SOCIAL MEDIA AWARD

Clubs shall submit by March 1, 2026 – the link for their Club Social Media page, along with the name of the Club's Social Media Editor/Chair to:

Sidney Gilley

sidneygilley@gmail.com

<https://app.box.com/s/q1pot2nnp5t56mxl7dqli2qoanb644yx/file/1422729925945>

BYLAWS, RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (BRR)

Submit any bylaw changes, resolutions or recommendations ninety (90) days prior to Conference.

Submit information to:

Carolyn Robinson

4900 Claycut Rd #23 Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Carolyn.robinson1951@yahoo.com

Save the Date

District Four Conference

April 17 - 19, 2026

Hosted by

Altrusa International of Oak Ridge, Tn