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Love Letters

On Sunday January 27 we got together for our annual summer social potluck lunch. This was hosted at Lorene's home this year and we made "Love Letters" again, a project we have enjoyed doing in the past that involves colouring in and laminating A4 letters which will be used to decorate the hospital rooms of long stay young patients. The individual letters are put together to spell out the child's name. We decorated the letters with paint, felt, glitter and stickers at both the January lunch and at an information evening to tell new volunteers a bit about Altrusa. We held that at Volunteer Wellington on Monday 18 March and had a relaxing evening of crafting and good shared food. Almost all the letters of the alphabet were coloured in with the exception of Q, so it was a great effort with a lot of new visitors who learnt about Altrusa.



Cooking for Ronald McDonald House



On 18th February members of our club met at Ronald McDonald house to cook a huge roast meal for 50 people, families who have had to temporarily relocate to be with their young children sick in hospital. This is another of our regular annual activities and a big thank you to Stella B for organising this project. This meal of roast chicken, roast veges, salads and Stella's homemade dessert was particularly popular.

Little Sprouts Grant

In April our club was delighted to be awarded a grant of US \$2000 from Altrusa International foundation. This was used to purchase items for The Little Sprouts charity whom we previously supported through volunteer hosting and waitressing last year at their fundraising Art auction. Little Sprouts put together comprehensive "baby boxes" which have everything material a child and parent needs for the first year of life and give them to families in need through various social agencies. Tricia went shopping for us and purchased \$1000 worth of books from Kilbirnie Children's Bookshop and Sue did a huge \$2006 shop at the Baby factory sale and bought a selection of necessities including clothing, toys, 3 bassinets and 3 car seats.

High Tea for Wellington Children's Hospital



Our biggest collective project of the year to date was a club catered pre Mother's Day high tea to raise funds for the new Wellington's children's hospital. Wellington Regional Children's Hospital provides dedicated out-patient and hospital care for children. It covers a population of 900,000 from Taranaki across to the Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa, Manawatu, Wellington and Marlborough. The Children's Hospital provides a day ward, two inpatient wards, a clinic for outpatient treatment, and an acute assessment unit to deal with referrals from the emergency department. As well as medical staff the hospital employs play specialists to encourage children to play and help make them feel better. They assist the children to understand their treatment and let them dress up and act it out. In July 2017 the Prime Minister announced that Mr Mark Dunajtschik would build a new children's hospital for about \$50m and donate it to the Hospital. The fit-out and state of the art medical equipment will be funded by the Wellington Hospitals Foundation with community support – the aim is to raise \$6 million for this.



Our goal for this project was to raise \$1000 to donate and our members volunteered a large amount of time to planning, decorating, baking, cooking and shopping as well as a busy afternoon on Sunday 5th May setting up and hosting the high tea. It was held at Vogelmorn Hall and we had around 40 guests who came for \$20 a ticket. We also held raffles of a pamper pack with items donated by members of our club, a Penthouse cinema and skincare raffle pack, a “guess the amount of chocolates” jar organised and provided by Janne and some cotton shopping bags and sewing voucher provided by Lorene. We were very generously donated all the tea we needed by T2. Julia opened the event and then Bill Day Chair of the Wellington Hospitals Foundation shared some information about the Children’s hospital and their fundraising goals. The event was a good success in that the attendees loved it, the food went down very well and things went without any big hitches. It was a big effort from everyone and it was agreed that if we were to do it again we should streamline things by having less food as there was quite a bit leftover and a lot on the plates, as well as raising the ticket prices significantly. We raised \$692 in the end from the high tea tickets and raffles which we topped up to \$750 to give to the Children’s hospital to go towards equipping the wards.



District 15 Conference 2019

The 35th District 15 Conference was hosted by and held in Te Awamutu on May 17-19th. The theme was “We are the champions.” Four Members attended, Ming-chun, Tricia and our delegates this year Sue and Janne. Congratulations to the clubs who received a 1st place win on awards night. For the Mamie L Bass service award Taieri club with the Men’s health expo, the Letha H Brown Literacy award Hawera club for Books in prisons, and for the Dr Nina Fay Calhoun International relations award the Cambridge club for Hand up not a hand out - Threads Across the Pacific. Tricia shares some of her experiences of conference weekend here..

The Te Awamutu conference was great. They had an array of good speakers; Linda Vagana spoke about Alan Duff’s Books in Homes programme and how working for it had changed her life goals and what a huge difference the programme made to individual children. I was particularly interested because Alan Duff had spoken at our Napier conference in 1995 and asked for Altrusa’s support at the beginning of his programme. Altrusa had responded with a 3 year commitment to fundraising and to actively working in our local schools, reading books and presenting them to children.

Jenny Magee spoke about the importance of putting ourselves first at times. Sometimes we settle in familiar ruts and responsibilities and dream about possibilities. She asked us to do not dream, to test new paths and live true to themselves. We age differently now from previous generations. Lets age how we want to not how we are expected to.

Caroline Mason talked about threads Across the Pacific, how she got involved and what a difference her dream is making to Pacific women. Many of the Altrusans had taken materials to the conference to gift to Caroline: 130 sewing machines, 6 locations, tons of fabric and sewing notions later teams of Kiwi women are making a difference for the better in these women's lives. Our past Governor Christine Melville is in Vanuatu this month as part of a kiwi team.



Governor's dinner



Governor's dinner was on Day 2 of Conference with installation of the new Board. Our club member, Ming-chun Wu was elected our Vice-Governor for District Fifteen. A few of our club members also won Foundation raffle prizes.



Little Sprouts packing day



On 9 June some of our members gathered at the Little Sprouts storage facility in Porirua to pack some boxes for needy families and see and put our recent donations in action. Pictured above is an example of what a finished box will contain - everything a baby needs for its first year of life and sometimes gifts for the mother too. On the right is Jo Alderdice founder of Little Sprouts. Below are our members Sue, Ming-chun, Francesca, Stella, Louise, Janne and Julia helping out.



Foster Hope Collection

At our July business meeting we had the opportunity to donate winter pyjamas and toiletries to Foster Hope in support of their annual pyjama appeal. These will be used in backpacks of essentials given to children going into Foster Care. Thanks to all our members who generously bought along toothpaste, shampoo, pyjamas and other basics that these kids are often going without.



In other news for July we would all like to congratulate Louise on the birth of her son Grayson on the 3rd July. He has already made an appearance at a couple of Altrusa events so we would like to warmly welcome him as an unofficial member.

Upcoming Events

Saturday 21 September - IFF day in Hawera

Sunday 13 October - Can Challenge at Countdown Newtown

Presidential Pondering

The year is flying by and we do apologise for the delay since our last newsletter. I hope everyone has been keeping warm over winter and enjoying being involved in the community whether through Altrusa or other interests.

As you'll see in this update, we've been keeping busy with a wide variety of activities including sewing for Little Sprouts, cooking for Ronald McDonald house, baking and hosting a high tea for Wellington Children's hospital, doing hands on service at Little Sprouts headquarters and collecting items for Foster Hope.

We have some of our regular activities coming up including collecting cans for the City Mission at Countdown Newtown on 13 October, and putting up our Christmas tree at Kilbirnie Children's Bookshop at the end of November to collect books for children staying in a Women's Refuge over Christmas.

In between these activities the club has also been busy preparing to host the District 15 Conference in 2020. During July we visited the conference venue Rydges to check out the conference and break out rooms and some of the fantastic accommodation on offer. The venue is conveniently located close to the CBD and waterfront, and we look forward to hosting Altrusans from all around New Zealand to show them what our beautiful city has on offer. We stayed for dinner at the restaurant and our conference convenor Tricia allocated some more jobs and shared some ideas with the group. Three members from the Ohariu club also came along as their club will be helping out with some of the conference organising tasks.

In other news, we were honoured to receive a letter from International President Leanne Milligan this week congratulating our club on being recognised at a 2018-2019 Distinguished Altrusa Club. We have received a distinguished club cord and year pin which we will display with pride, and Leanne has extended her thanks to all of our club members for the service they do for the community in the name of Altrusa.

Our next business meeting is tomorrow evening and we'll be planning some of our upcoming projects. Visitors are welcome as always, so if you're interested in coming along as a guest or hearing more about what we have coming up please feel free to contact us.

Yours in Altrusa,

Julia Stevens

President, Altrusa International of Wellington

District 15 News

2019 Board installation

Congratulations to the new District 15 Board members for 2019 - 2021 pictured from the left:

Christine Melville, Claire Paterson, Lynette Budge, Melanie Squires, Fiona Wilson-Taylor, Ming-chun Wu, Danae McConnel & Governor Maria Mackay.



Our neighbour club Ohariu

In July with their "Get Set for a Brighter Future" project. They purchased sets of instructional readers for Linden Primary School, sets of novels for the Arohata Prison Library Book Club, and sets of fiction books that represent women in technology for local primary and intermediate school libraries,

providing a total of almost 250 brand-new books to the local community. This project aims to provide sets of literacy resources that empower women and children to develop new skills, extend their knowledge, and understand the opportunities that are created through education.

Days for Girls This District wide International project is continuing on with clubs all around New Zealand running sewing bees to make reusable sanitary items and kit bags. Below are efforts from Timaru who made 295 transport bags in a day and more started with the help of Inner Wheel club of Waimate.



International News



The 2019 Altrusa International convention was held in Reno Nevada from July 17-20. Here are our new Zealand attendees at the awards dinner.

Our sister club Altrusa international of Champaign Urbana

Congratulations to our sister club who were awarded the Letha H Brown Award for the best literacy project this biennium for Read Across America at the recent International convention in Reno. About 1000 kids attended Read Across America on March 2 and Lincoln Square. Kids who completed five activities and heard three stories got to pick out a free book to take home. Altrusa has been a major sponsor of this event since it started more than 15 years ago. More than 20 Altrusans helped served on the planning committee, helped set up, greeted attendees and signed in volunteers, helped kids make puppets, helped kids pick out their books, and helped clean up. See below some pictures from the March event.

