

NEWSLETTER

Altrusa International of the Central Coast, Inc
PO Box 5026, Santa Maria, CA 93456
www.altrusaofthecentralcoast.org



SEPTEMBER 2025

Central Coast Altrusans,

As the weather starts cooling down, we begin to welcome Fall into our days as was shown by the lightning and rain last week that was absolutely spectacular! Now let's strike up a little lightning of our own!!

At the October 13th business meeting we will be welcoming seven new members into our club. Please be present at the Baxter Home prior to 6pm with pins on proudly. We also have a program that evening presented by Christine Meugniot, Volunteer Supervisor Dignity Health Hospice. She will be speaking on hospice care and volunteering in the hospice program.

GET THOSE COOL HAND LUKE BBQ TICKETS SOLD!!! After combining the ballots from all three Altrusa clubs the majority vote was to support **Partners in Caring**. So, the funds raised from all of the ticket sales will be given to that one non-profit. But time is ticking on the deadline for ticket sales. Let Altrusa of the Central Coast outsell the other clubs in raising funds for **Partners in Caring**!!

Your President,
Nancy Voss



Established in 1997, we are a 501 (c)(3) non-profit that helps older dependent seniors sustain daily living. We are all aging, and many of us face other difficulties with our day-to-day living. At some point in our lives, we need help to sustain daily living as well as help accessing basic needs such as food, medical care, and human connection. Community Partners in Caring was established to help our neighbors with these extra services. We are a volunteer management and training organization engaged in providing free non-medical caregiving services to dependent older seniors age 62 and over and adults living with mild disabilities. We recruit, screen, train, manage, and match volunteers with individuals in need of care and support. Our volunteers are thoroughly screened and we maintain a robust compliance and training program; **our services are always free.**

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

October 6-Board Meeting-IHOP
October 13-Bus. meeting- Betty's
October 11-Alzheimers Walk
October 18- 11am-2pm, Cool Hand Luke's BBQ Fundraiser
October 25-Vets Stand Down and Make a Difference Day
November 3- El Palenque, 6pm
November 10-FOT site, 6pm



9/8/25-Business Meeting-Olive Garden:

We had a nice turn out at our meeting. It was nice to see everyone coming together like one big team (together everyone achieves more.) Members celebrated Int'l Literacy Day and we even received gifts, canteen or water bottle and an "owl" hand squeezer. Thank you, club board!



9/9: Bea, Maria (Ronnie) and Melinda attended the Alzheimer's Walk kickoff at Wine Inn; we enjoyed wine appetizers and raffles.

♥ On Saturday, October 11, Altrusan's will join together at Waller Park for the Alzheimer's Walk. Check-in begins at 8:00 a.m., and the walk steps off at 9:00 a.m.

Our Altrusa sister Bea will be walking in memory of her late husband, Paul, who courageously lived with Alzheimer's. Melinda will also walk alongside Bea—supporting her cause and standing strong for a cure.

We invite you to come out, walk with us, and show your support. Together, we can honor loved ones, uplift Bea, and take steps toward ending Alzheimer's.

Walking today... Love ...for those we never forget."



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

9/17-Sunday Ballas
10/11-Stephanie Stadtmiller
10/30-Lupe Maldonado



Congratulations to Dayna DeBernardi Watson – SESLOC Community Volunteer Award Recipient

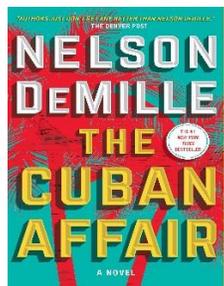
We are proud to share that our very own **Dayna DeBernardi Watson** has received the **SESLOC Community Volunteer Award**. Dayna has been a dedicated member of **Altrusa of the Central Coast** for over 10 years, and her commitment to service shines through in everything she does. Dayna has participated in all of our hands-on projects, always stepping forward with a spirit of generosity and encouragement. She has been a constant support to our **ASTRA Club at Righetti High School**, guiding and inspiring young volunteers to embrace service and leadership.

Our club is truly fortunate to have such a giving and compassionate member. Dayna's recognition is well deserved, and we celebrate her as both a role model and a friend. Congratulations, Dayna!

LITERACY

Book Review: *The Cuban Affair* by Nelson DeMille (Melinda has a copy you can borrow)

Nelson DeMille, known for his fast-paced thrillers, takes readers on an unforgettable adventure in *The Cuban Affair*. The novel follows Daniel "Mac" McCormick, a U.S. Army veteran turned charter boat captain in Key West. Mac is drawn into a dangerous mission when a group of Cuban-Americans hires him to help recover hidden wealth left behind during the Cuban Revolution. DeMille blends suspense, action, and humor with his trademark attention to detail. The story immerses readers in the rich history, culture, and politics of Cuba, offering both entertainment and a glimpse into a country long shrouded in mystery for many Americans. Mac is a likable, sharp-witted protagonist, and his moral struggles add depth to what could easily be just another action-packed plot. While the pacing is sometimes leisurely, the build-up pays off with a tense and unpredictable finale. Readers who enjoy espionage, political thrillers, or adventurous tales with a touch of romance will find *The Cuban Affair* both engaging and thought-provoking.



SERVICE

RECURRING SERVICE PROJECTS: The following list are recurring monthly projects. Our club is always collecting **RX bottles, underwear/washcloths** and **aluminum tabs**. Please bring them to our business meetings. Thank You!



Hope Village – Still Going Strong

Hope Village in Santa Maria continues to thrive thanks to the dedication of many nonprofits that donate their time and resources to keep this community active and alive. Our club is proud to support Hope Village throughout this Altrusa year. Member Sunday Ballas stays in close contact with Brian, the manager of Hope Village, to learn about the current needs of this homeless community. If you have ideas or project suggestions, please reach out to President Nancy Voss. As the saying goes, *it takes a village*—and together, we can continue to make a difference. **Reminder: Sunday will be collecting Christmas “stocking stuffer” items; please bring them to the October 13 meeting. Hope Village residents thank you! (looking for ideas: donations of lanyards, key chains and small powder drink packets that will go nicely in the stockings)**



Vets Stand Down – October 25

Our member Sunday will be chairing this year’s **Vets Stand Down on October 25**. She has a budget to purchase items and plans to buy drawstring backpacks to fill with useful supplies for veterans. This way, each veteran will receive everything conveniently packed in one bag. If you would like to contribute, donations are welcome! Items especially needed include **white socks, small flashlights**, or anything practical that could fit inside the backpacks. Please bring your donations to our **October 13 business meeting**. Together, we can help make this project a success and show our appreciation to local veterans.

“ONE BAG, MANY BLESSINGS”



NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!

About Our Local Chapter- Next bed build are as follows:

- **9/13**-SM Elks, 1309 S. Bradley, 8am-1pm; thousands of volunteers joined Elks chapters across the country to build 10,000; At our Santa Maria Elk's there were over 280 volunteers from different organizations. We built 104 beds for local kids. Thank you to the members that donated bedding and attended the build and our ASTRA of AHC and PVHS for helping! *Please scroll down to ASTRA Clubs to see some wonderful photos taken during the build.*
- **11/8**-Serve Santa Maria and SM Home Depot, 2120 S. Bradley; **GOAL:** 100 beds; 8am



Our club proudly supports *Days for Girls* with two drop-offs each year, since 2018; one in March and one in October. With October just around the corner, we are running low on two essential items: **underwear** and **washcloths**. If you would like to contribute, please bring donations to our **October 13 business meeting**. These items are vital components of the menstruation kits, which are lovingly sewn and prepared by the Santa Barbara Days for Girls chapter. Once completed, the kits are sent to designated locations outside the country, providing dignity and care to girls in need. Together, we can help ensure these kits are complete and ready to make a difference. *This will be the last drop off since they are closing their chapter in 2026. Read letter/email below....*

[Letter from the Days for Girls Santa Barbara Chapter](#)

Dear Melinda and Fellow Club Members-Our Santa Barbara Days for Girls Team is approaching 10 years of providing girls and women with sustainable menstrual kits. This was made possible by the generous donations needed to complete the kits that are used by girls and women worldwide. Our team has provided DfG kits to communities in Haiti, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Sudan, Lebanon, and most recently, Guadalupe California. The enthusiastic support of Altrusa of the Central Coast Altrusa, District Eleven has been a true partnership. The unexpected surprise packages at Jane's doorstep that included washcloths, soap and panties were so welcome that we named the donor the "**Panty Angel**". Our most recent DfG distributions have been in Guadalupe in partnership with Family Service Agency; and we have a third distribution planned there later this month. After 10 years of rewarding hard-work we are beginning to wind down our Santa Barbara Team efforts and plan to close our Team in 2026. We are most grateful for Altrusa of the Central Coast monetary grants, donations of kit contents, and most of all your friendship and sustained support of our efforts since 2018.

Jane Santos Sweeney

Jean Santos Howard

santabarbaraca@daysforgirls.org

COMMUNICATIONS

Sunshine Committee-The Sunshine Chair is responsible for communicating, on behalf of the Altrusa Club, any get well wishes, condolences, sympathy, etc. to members needing a little Sunshine in their life. Sunshine examples might include reaching out to members who are sick, have had surgery, are in the hospital, lost a loved one, etc. Thank you to Stephanie for chairing this committee. Stephanie can be reached at 805-310-2263 or by email at 60mermaidstevie@gmail.com.

Newsletter Committee-If you have articles/pictures, please email to Melinda by the 25th of each month at: melinda.aguirre84@yahoo.com

Website and Social-Media-You can visit our CLUB website at:
districteleven.altrusa.org/central-coast.

Check us out on face-book at our official page, Altrusa of the Central Coast.

District Service Bulletin-The DSB is emailed to all District Eleven members three times per year and contains DISTRICT ELEVEN updates. Make sure to read it and any other emails you receive from Altrusa International.

*You can find the district eleven website: districteleven.altrusa.org.

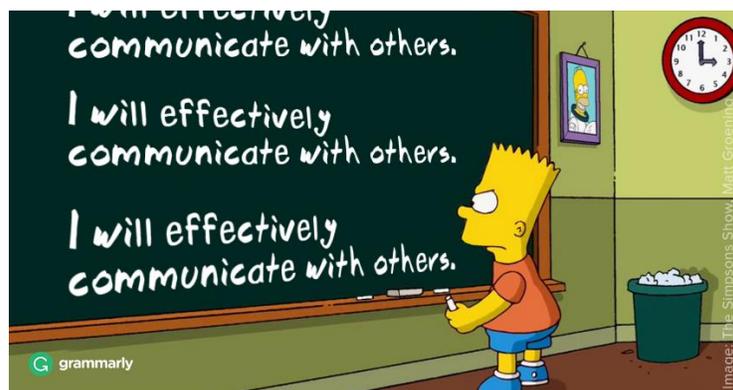
Altrusa International-**THE COMPASS** comes out every other month to ALL Altrusa Members and is filled with any changes, events and inspirations and can be found at the International Website: altrusa.org. **username:** Altrusan, **password:** MamieBass1955

Yearbook-The communications committee is working on our **club yearbook; expected by October 2025**.

Navigating the ALTRUSA Web... • Important websites to know!

www.altrusa.org (click Member Login in the upper right) *See above*

www.altrusastore.com (purchase Altrusa branded items including pins and banners)



DISTRICT ELEVEN NEWS

DISTRICT ELEVEN INFORMATION:

- District Eleven held their fall workshop in AZ and it was a wonderful and well attended event. The workshop was divided into several categories: leadership, mentorship and onboarding.

ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT ELEVEN CONFERENCE
April 30-May 3- Avondale, Arizona

ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Altrusa Project Guide

The key to impacting your members and community is to put the club's ideas into practice. Altrusa Project Guides (APG) helps turn project ideas into reality. The Project Guide covers all aspects of running a project from goal setting, manpower assignments, budgeting, creating a timeline and careful evaluation of the project's success. The APG is written to assist the project chair in planning a successful project and help develop the leadership skills of your club members. This APG is your resource for running a successful project and ensuring future Project Chairs have a good base and history from which to work.

Question 3: What are the specific manpower assignments? List each individual along with specific duties and responsibilities. For manpower assignments where a specific person(s) has not yet been selected, list the specific responsibilities, talents, skills, knowledge, or abilities that person(s) will need to possess. Be sure to include the smallest of tasks that might help achieve 100% participation.

Designate the following activities for every project:

- Who will write the Altrusa Project Guide?
- Who will secure a camera and take photos?
- Who will secure the location?
- Who will report on the project at membership meetings? Who will report on the project at board meetings?
- Who will make the sign-in sheet?
- Who will recruit potential new members at the project? Who will ask members to work on the project?
- Who will write a newsletter article promoting the project?
- Who will submit a press release to the local media?
- Who will compile info and photos to be used for Award submission?

CLUB FOUNDATION NEWS

FESTIVAL OF TREES:

Maria has been busy collecting Festival of Trees Sponsor applications/contracts. She has mailed, emailed and called previous sponsors. We have 15 so far and it's only the beginning of September.

- We have the 2025 Raffle permit.
- Trees have not been purchased
- FOT budget is being updated
- Sponsor night is 11/20 and we will have a dessert bar

If you know any of the sponsors and feel comfortable contacting them, call them and chat up FOT. "Friendly-ness" goes a long way.

Our FOT budget is \$6,200 this year. The foundation is working on trying to stay within the budget.

FOUNDATION BOARD News:

9/15: board meeting was changed to IHOP at 6pm.

- went over FOT budget with a "fine tooth comb"
- we elected Kim Tito as our "banking" treasurer, Noe will sign checks, board will help to fill out necessary state of Calif reports;
- Noe is updating the Scholarship and will create a "point system" to grade scholarships
- Next meeting is January 2026, date TBD.

Festival of Trees – We Need YOU!

Our annual *Festival of Trees* is almost here, and we need every Altrusa member to step up and volunteer! This is our club's **major fundraiser of the year**, and it takes all of us working together to make it a success. Please be ready to set aside your personal plans and commit to volunteering during the fundraiser dates: **November 28 – December 14**. Whether it's greeting visitors, helping with sales, or supporting behind the scenes, every member's contribution is vital. The funds we raise during Festival of Trees go directly into the heart of our mission—supporting **grants, scholarships, and our service, literacy and ASTRA Club projects throughout the year**. This is how we continue to make a difference in our community, and it only happens when we all pitch in. Don't get left behind—this is a fun, festive, and meaningful event that you'll want to be part of. Mark your calendars now, cancel other plans if you must, and be ready to help us make this year's Festival of Trees the best yet!

ASTRA CLUBS- sponsored by Altrusa of the Central Coast

SEPTEMBER-ASTRA Club of RHS by Dayna

Righetti ASTRA has been busy getting the 2025-2026 School Year started! Two ASTRA meetings were held in September with an attendance of close to 100 students at both meetings! Our ASTRA officers for this year are:

Soleil Blouin (President)

Alessandra Castelli (Vice President of Publicity/Social Media)

Yaritza Perez (Vice President of Literacy)

Santiago Jimenez (Secretary of Membership/Attendance)

Devina Martinez (Secretary of Community Service)

Natalie Valenzuela (Secretary of Community Service)

September 6, 2025: Righetti ASTRA participated in the September 6th "Serve Santa Maria" event by giving back to their community. This month's project was titled Helping Seniors, which entailed helping a lovely senior citizen couple clear out their garage and trim their backyard. A roll-off container was filled and hauled away with all the yard trimmings and stuff from the garage! The wife from the home couldn't stop singing the praises of all the amazing volunteers who helped at her house, it made such an impact on this couple! The ASTRA RHS volunteers got just as much out of the project by being able to help someone and see what an impact it had on their life!



September 20, 2025: Fall Children Crafts @ The Orcutt Library 11:00-1:00 - we resume our monthly craft and reading project with a fall theme.



September 20, 2025: Altrusa Storage Cleanup - help **Altrusa with storage** unit cleanup and organization. Thank you Righetti ASTRA members Samantha Fernandez, Nicholas Matautia, and Jhuleia Mercado for helping with Altrusa of the Central Coast's storage unit cleanup and organization on Saturday, September 20th.



September 25th, Thursday, found Righetti ASTRA along with Altrusa President, Nancy Voss, participating at the **Falling into Literacy** Event at Kermit McKenzie School in Guadalupe. ASTRA RHS volunteers Judith Arevalo, Daniela Espinoza, Genesis Mora, Fernanda Ramirez, Milagros Rodriguez, Nadya Rosas, Abigail Santos, and Diana Vences did a great job handing out 184 free books from the Righetti book drive and providing books to a 4th period teacher! It was extra special for the ASTRA RHS volunteers to give back to their Guadalupe community and the school they all attended!



Week of 9/22 Righetti Social Media Video: ASTRA members Soleil Blouin, Nadya Rosas, and Ansh Vinchhi made a video introducing the ASTRA Club and giving announcements for the upcoming week. They did a fabulous job representing themselves and the ASTRA Club!

9/27 -Members of the ASTRA Club of Righetti High School volunteered at the annual **Orcutt Chalk Festival** held in Old Orcutt. The students helped make the event a success by assisting children with their chalk art and guiding participants throughout the festival. Their cheerful energy and community spirit brought smiles to many faces and added color—literally—to the day!



Ernest Righetti Astra presents

HALLOWEEN

Children's Crafts

Saturday October 18th 2025
11AM-1PM

175 S Broadway, Orcutt
Orcutt Library

Children of All Ages Welcome!
Come with your Halloween costume for a prize!

The poster features a light blue background decorated with various Halloween-themed illustrations: pumpkins, ghosts, leaves, and musical notes. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold, serif, and sans-serif fonts.

September-ASTRA Club of AHC by Melinda

9/3-HANCOCK BULLDOG BOW-WOW: Studies have shown that students with higher engagement in their campus communities through clubs reflect higher G.P.A.'s and acceleration through their college careers. Clubs invigorate the campus life and it keeps them involved in just being a community and embracing each other. Allan Hancock College's student population is a diverse mix from recent high school graduates to older non-traditional students. Thank you to Ariana and Matthew, recent Pioneer Valley High School graduates, for helping share ASTRA Club OF AHC. We did receive 15 applications at this event. AHC provided canopy and table.



9/5/25-ASTRA AHC CLUB meeting: Our first meeting was @ 2:30 at AHC Bldg. A, room A103; we voted in the 2025-2026 board. We also assembled Mental Alliance "Be well kits" for 9/17 project; Each kit contained: polished stone-stay grounded; pencil pal eraser-mistakes are part of learning; bracelet with encouraging word-carry positivity; encouraging card-words to lift you up; chocolate-a sweet self-care break; reading sticker-knowledge empowers us. All in a cute baggie!



9/13/25-SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE PROJECT: Nathan and Vincent signed up to volunteer at SHP. This was their first time building a bed. They truly enjoyed being a part of the group of other volunteers, drilling holes on the soon to be bed frame and representing **ASTRA of AHC**. They worked from 8am-12pm and enjoyed a free lunch.



9/17-Mental Alliance at AHC: this is the first year for the TMH “Mental Alliance” fair held on the AHC campus. There were numerous organizations sharing and handing out free material. ASTRA AHC created a “Be Well Kit”, raffled two door prizes and shared what ASTRA was about. Thank you to Altrusa Member Maria & ASTRA AHC members: Adam, Jacob, Lizbeth for volunteering.



9/19-ASTRA AHC Meeting: our guest speaker was Victor Vega who works at SB County Juvenile Hall. The ASTRA members created 80 “Encouragement Snack Kits” for Victor to take back to the boys in Juvenile detention. It included an encouragement card and four pre-packaged snacks.



SEPTEMBER-ASTRA CLUB OF PVHS by Melinda and Tyler

9/2: Mall Event: 13 ASTRA students arrived to help set up tables for the monthly mall event. We had crafts, beads, LEGOS, coloring and raffle prizes to give away. It was fun and we had approximately 95 people attend out tables. The students always do a great job of interacting with the kids;



9/7-INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY: Ten ASTRA students from Pioneer Valley High School celebrated **International Literacy Day** at the Santa Maria Town Center Mall. From 2–4 p.m., the students handed out 90 books and 90 activity bags, each filled with at least four fun crafts for children to enjoy at home. The activity bags were assembled on-site by the students, creating a lively and interactive project space. With many of the ASTRA members being bilingual, they were able to connect with families and children in both English and Spanish, making the event even more welcoming and impactful. This project highlighted ASTRA's dedication to literacy, service, and community engagement while spreading the joy of reading to local children.



ASTRA MOTTO: "GROWING IN SERVICE"

9/12-at our **meeting** we had lots of new applications. The board did a wonderful job of leading the large group of students; everyone signed up to help with a future project. Mr. Tyler gave his wonderful **ASTRA PV** speech: attend meetings, if you sign-up show-up, ASTRA scholarship info.

9/13-Sleep in Heavenly Peace-Elks Parking Lot: **10 ASTRA PVHS** students volunteered to make 104 beds at this event held at **Santa Maria Elk's Parking Lot**. ASTRA was tasked to remove the staples/paper and measure the wood so they could be cut. They also helped to clean up and help load the storage van. Then we were treated to lunch.



9/17-Good Samaritan Recovery Fair: we gave out **100 books**, made and gave out activity bags, gave out "**Princess Lea-I Read**" socks; 11 volunteers showed up to help little's choose a book and guide them to the other tables; it was a family friendly event and **DJ Pete** did a good job of mixing dance music to everyone's taste. It was an **eye opener** to some of the ASTRA students who were attending for the first time. They got learn first hand what drug recovery was about. **Good Samaritan** gave us hot dogs, soda and cake! We left with lots of goodies.



CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nancy Voss	President
Maria Castillo	Vice President
Stephanie Stadtmiller	Secretary
Sunday Ballas	Treasurer
Leticia Kossuth	Director
Noe Mahelona	Director
Patty Elswick	Immediate Past President

FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Leticia Kossuth	President
Raye Zelaya	Vice President
Kim Tito	Treasurer
Melinda Aguirre	Secretary
Bea Goyette	Director
Noe Mahelona	Director

COMMITTEES

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Chair: Leticia; Committee: Maria, Melinda

LITERACY/SERVICE COMMITTEE: Chair: Nancy; committee: Norma, Sunday

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Chair: Stephanie, Melinda

ASTRA OF RHS ADVISORS: Dayna DeBernardi Watson

ASTRA OF PVHS ADVISORS: Melinda Aguirre and Tyler Dickinson

ASTRA of AHC ADVISOR: Melinda Aguirre

**Altrusa of the Central Coast
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