

NEWSLETTER

Altrusa International of the Central Coast, Inc
PO Box 5026, Santa Maria, CA 93456
www.districteleven.altrusa.org/central-coast



JANUARY 2026

Hello Members,
2026 has arrived and is moving swiftly....
The bad news is that time flies. The good news is that you're the pilot.

What moves you? What gets you excited? Is there any way our members can do a service for your interest? Our club is always looking for community activities to offer assistance, guidance and/or possibly monetary assistance. Before committing our club for an activity please complete a project form to be reviewed by the board prior to it being presented to the membership. You can get us all involved in what is important to you.

We support one another, we encourage one another, we fit together with our individual traits and experiences. We each are an important piece of our entire club puzzle.

See you on February 9th at Giovanni's Pizza in Orcutt.

Nancy

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

Feb 2-Board Meeting-

Feb 9-Business Meeting-Giavanni's Pizza



JANUARY/FEBRUARY

1/15/26 Natalie Baldwin

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

What Is an Altrusa Member Highlight?

An Altrusa Member Highlight is our way of shining a light on the amazing people who make our club thrive—you! Each highlight features one member and shares a bit about who they are, what brought them to Altrusa, and what they love most about serving others. It's a simple but meaningful way to celebrate the heart behind our service.

Why Do We Do Member Highlights?

Because Altrusa is more than meetings and projects—it's people. Member Highlights help us:

- Get to know one another beyond name badges and agendas
- Strengthen connections and friendships within our club
- Celebrate the diverse talents, experiences, and passions of our members
- Show appreciation for the time, energy, and heart our members give

These stories remind us why we joined and why we stay. They also help newer members feel welcomed and long-time members feel valued. We invite all members to submit a short bio (up to **300 words**) to be featured in an upcoming newsletter. You can share:

- How long you've been an Altrusan
- Why you joined Altrusa
- Your favorite project or committee
- A fun fact, hobby, or something you're passionate about

Whether you're a brand-new member or a seasoned Altrusan, your story matters. Let us highlight *you* and celebrate the incredible people behind our mission of literacy, service, and leadership. **Please send your bio to Newsletter Editor: melinda.aguirre84@yahoo.com**

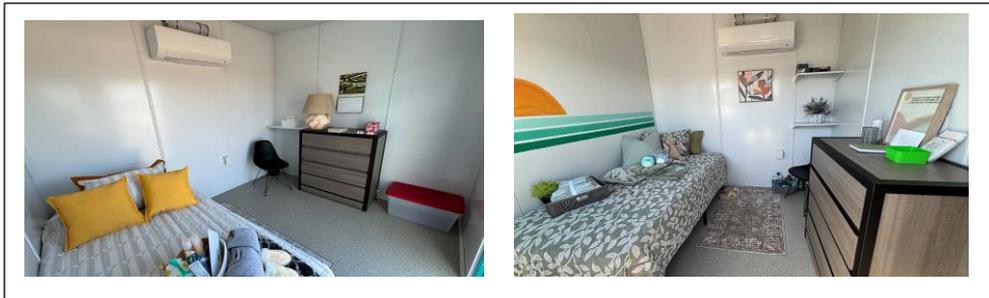
LITERACY: Our storage shelves hold more than books—they hold the promise of literacy, learning, and brighter futures for our community. Let's find a place to give books away!

SERVICE

RECURRING SERVICE PROJECTS: The following list are recurring monthly projects. Our club is always collecting **RX bottles, aluminum tabs and bedding for Sleep in Heavenly Peace**. Please bring them to our business meetings. Aluminum tabs go to Stephanie- RX bottles go to Bea-and Melinda gets the bedding. Thank You!

Hope Village

Hope Village is an interim supportive housing community in Santa Maria that provides 94 private rooms for up to 113 transitional-age youth, veterans, and individuals needing medical recuperative care. Located on County-owned land near essential services and transit, the community serves North County residents by offering a safe place to rebuild. With comprehensive wraparound services and a dignified living environment, Hope Village helps residents move toward permanent housing and long-term stability. Hope Village is an interim supportive housing community in Santa Maria, created in partnership with the County of Santa Barbara to help close the region's shelter gap. The site provides 94 private rooms with capacity for up to 113 residents, including transitional-age youth, veterans, and individuals requiring medical recuperative care. Located on County-owned land, Hope Village sits just minutes from public services and major transit routes, ensuring accessibility for those who need it most. The community is designed to serve North County residents exclusively, offering a safe and stable place to begin healing and rebuilding. Each resident has access to wraparound services that support long-term stability and progress toward permanent housing. The environment prioritizes dignity, privacy, and support, helping people take meaningful next steps in their lives. Hope Village stands as a key part of the region's strategy to provide immediate, high-quality shelter solutions.



**NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!**

Next build: The Home Depot – SLO, Saturday, February 21, 2026

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our incredible members for your generous donations of bedding for **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**. Your kindness ensures that when a child receives a new bed, they also receive the comfort, warmth, and dignity of fresh sheets and blankets. Because of your continued support, we are able to meet the growing need in our community. As more beds are built and delivered, bedding remains one of the most essential and appreciated items. Thank you for helping us make a difference—one bed, one child, and one sweet dream at a time.

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 or text 805.448.6268

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 was 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*

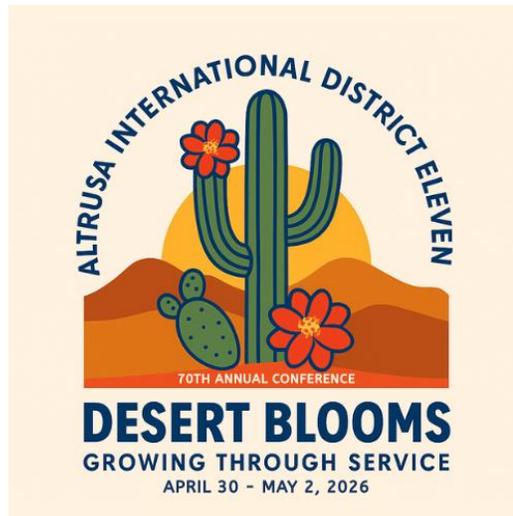
login.altrusa.org (go directly to the members area)

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



DISTRICT ELEVEN NEWS

DISTRICT ELEVEN INFORMATION:



ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL

Taken from the Int'l Altrusa Compass:

Just in time for Valentine's Day, we are launching our first membership challenge entitled **"Be a Friend – Bring a Friend."** It's the perfect time to put two words of my biennium theme to life...LOVE and LEGACY. I invite you to ask someone to attend a meeting with you, participate in a service project, or - best of all – become an Altrusan. Show them the love that comes from part of our organization and dream with me about the legacy we can build by expanding the service we provide in our communities. What do you need to do for the **"Be a Friend – Bring a Friend" challenge?**

- Recruit at least one new active (not dual) member between February 14th – March 14th.
- Ensure the new member is entered in Group Tally during this period, and that their dues are paid.
- Before April 1st, Altrusa International will draw five winning clubs, each receiving \$100 to use for a membership event, a service project or where it is needed most

Days For Girls:



These funds will help expand menstrual health education, increase access to supplies, and support dignity for people who menstruate around the world. The impact of **Illuminate Her** will extend far beyond this season, reaching communities and creating opportunity in the months and years ahead. In the coming year, we look forward to continuing this work, sharing updates on the impact you helped make possible, and bringing more visibility to the stories that deserve to be seen.



ALTRUSA PIN The Altrusa pin is always worn proudly over the heart, affixed directly onto a blouse, sweater, suit lapel or dress. Out of respect, the pin must never be worn, elsewhere on person or as a garment decoration.

CLUB FOUNDATION NEWS

FOUNDATION BOARD:

1. Meeting held on: 2/4
2. FOT fundraiser total: \$55,878.50
3. Distribution Grant amount for Grants: \$19,500 and Scholarships: \$24,000
4. Donation approved of \$500 to Altrusa Int'l to be presented at 2026 Conference
5. Scholarship and Grant applications will be uploaded into Altrusa website
6. Will schedule a meeting after we receive the scholarship applications which are due 4/15

FESTIVAL OF TREES REPORT:

- Trees for 2026 have been purchased and are in storage; 17 trees, 7.5 ft trees, 10 green and 7 white;
- FOT will hold the November 2026 Chamber Mixer
- Our 2026 FOT committee chairs will be Noe Mahelona and Sunday Ballas

ASTRA CLUBS- sponsored by Altrusa of the Central Coast

January-ASTRA Club of RHS by Dayna

Righetti ASTRA has returned from winter break and is prepared for a busy spring semester!



Yearbook needed a club photo

asap, so we got together and did a quick one! Thought it might be nice to add in the newsletter so our club members can see some of our future leaders!

Kindness Week Challenge: January 26th-30th. Righetti ASTRA along with the Righetti Wellness Center and ASB will be participating in the Kindness Week Challenge. The week will consist of a spirit week of students wearing special themed attire each day along with planned kindness activities during lunch. ASTRA will also be doing some outside separate acts of kindness during the week. We need to remember that kindness matters and "In an age of constant noise and negativity, there is a growing need for intentional kindness. Research shows that kindness improves emotional well-being, strengthens relationships, and builds resilient communities." - The Great Kindness Challenge.



Friends of the Orcutt Library Book Sale: The book sale is taking place on Saturday, February 7th, from 10:00-1:30, at the Orcutt Library. Thank you to ASTRA volunteers Devina Martinez and Natalie Valenzuela for hanging book sale flyers around the Orcutt area to inform the public about the sale.

FYI, a nice little article acknowledging Altrusa and RHS ASTRA! Also support their upcoming book sale. Good job, **ASTRA Club** of RHS!

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Book Sales!

The next book sale to benefit the Orcutt Library will be

Saturday, February, 7th, 10 am - 1:30 pm

Great books, CD's, DVDs, and puzzles for all ages

UPCOMING BOOK SALE DATES 2026
MAY 2, AUGUST 1, NOVEMBER 7

All money raised at our sales supplement the purchase of new books, technology, special programs and community awareness for the Orcutt Library.



ASTRA Crafts with Kids at Orcutt Library!

By Carol Gregor, VP FOL

We are once more very excited about the ASTRA Community Service Club, from Righetti High School, providing crafts for children at Orcutt Library. Each month a theme has been selected and students, along with their advisor, Dayna DeBernardi, will have a variety of fun, engaging crafts for elementary aged children to make and take home. A special thank you to ASTRA students and Dayna for their service. We are grateful to Altrusa of the Central Coast Club for sponsoring ASTRA's service to the Orcutt Library. See below for the 2025/26 schedule. (Look for monthly flyers at the library for updated dates.)

- January 17th - Winter
- February 14th - Valentine's Day
- March 21st - Easter Bunny
- April 18th - Spring
- May 9th - Mother's Day
- June 13th - Summer



- RIGHETTI ASTRA CLUB PRESENTS -

Valentine's Day

CRAFTS

For children of all ages

February 14th
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
175 S Broadway, Orcutt
Orcutt Library



1/17/26-Righetti ASTRA hosted a Winter Crafts event at the Orcutt Library on Saturday, January 17th. Fun winter crafting and prizes for children were done with volunteers Miah Arevalo, Soleil Blouin, Braden Collins, Natalia Hernandez, Devina Martinez, and John Snyder. A fun event with a not so winter day as it was close to 80 degrees!



JANUARY-ASTRA Club of AHC by Melinda

ASTRA Allan Hancock College – Living the Altrusa Mission- Year-End Recap

Throughout 2025, ASTRA Allan Hancock College proudly lived out the Altrusa mission of literacy and service by serving our community where the need was greatest. From supporting senior citizens, advocating for mental health awareness, assisting those experiencing homelessness, and participating in bed builds, our members demonstrated that service takes many forms—and each one helps strengthen lives and futures. These projects reinforced an important truth: when basic needs are met, individuals are better able to learn, grow, and thrive. By addressing both immediate needs and long-term well-being, ASTRA members helped create stronger foundations for literacy, education, and opportunity in our community. We extend our sincere gratitude to our sponsoring Altrusa of the Central Coast Club for their mentorship and continued support, and to Clint Freeland, Allan Hancock College Club Advisor, for his guidance and encouragement throughout the year. Together, we are shaping servant leaders and advancing Altrusa’s mission—one project, one person, and one community at a time.

Bulldog Bow-Wow will be taking place at the Santa Maria Campus on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Mechanics Bank Student Center (Building G). The Bulldog Bow-WOW is an opportunity for students to learn about essential student services to help them succeed in college, join clubs, meet key faculty and staff, explore various academic, career and technical programs, connect with community partners, and enjoy free entertainment and food! With over 1,000 students attending previous Bulldog Bow WOW events, ASTRA AHC will have a great opportunity to let students know about our club and recruit members. Melinda and a student will be attending this high energy event. The students will work in one hour increments due to classes.

ASTRA-KINDNESS POSTCARDS DAY APRIL 7-a Global Day of Creativity, compassion, and connection. ASTRA Club of PVHS and AHC have registered and will join ASTRA clubs around the world in a kindness movement. Students everywhere will come together to design postcards of encouragement and share them with people who could use a little extra light in their day. Clubs will also get a chance to exchange digital postcards internationally, building bridges of empathy and youth leadership across borders. Who will receive the kindness: hospitals, elderly homes, schools, community service workers and others in our community. #ASTRAKindnessDay

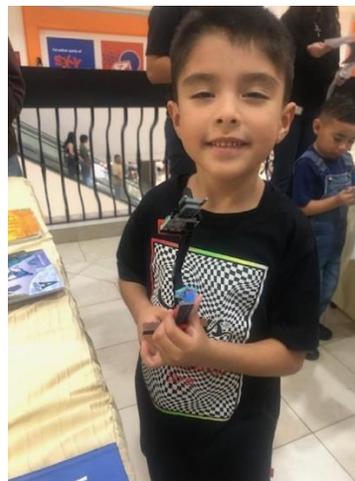


JANUARY-ASTRA CLUB OF PVHS by Melinda and Tyler

ASTRA PV 2025 Year-End Recap

WOW! What an amazing year for ASTRA PV! In 2025, our members truly lived out Altrusa's mission of *service, leadership, and literacy*. Through hands-on projects and community outreach, we made a real difference—especially at our mall event where in 2025, nearly 1080 kids enjoyed crafts, activities, and went home with a brand-new book. ASTRA Club gave away over 1500 books! Each project gave our students the chance to lead, serve, and work as a team while supporting families right here in our community. We are incredibly proud of our ASTRA PV members for putting service above self, grateful for our Altrusa partners and supporters, and excited to continue growing as leaders and changemakers in 2026. ASTRA PV is proof that when young leaders serve, communities thrive!

1/16/2026-Astra PVHS recently hosted a fun-filled outreach event at the mall, and it was a wonderful success! With the help of 10 amazing student volunteers, we welcomed approximately 90 children and families for an afternoon of creativity and connection. The kids enjoyed a variety of hands-on activities, including a craft station, LEGO table, and fingernail painting, all designed to spark imagination and smiles. One of the highlights of the event was giving away 90 books, helping encourage a love of reading for every child who attended. We are incredibly grateful for the dedication and enthusiasm of our student volunteers, whose kindness and energy made this event possible. Thank you for making a meaningful difference in our community and helping us share the joy of learning and literacy.



APRIL 7, 2026

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, Nancy, Melinda

ASTRA OF RHS ADVISORS: Dayna DeBernardi Watson

ASTRA OF PVHS ADVISORS: Melinda Aguirre and Tyler Dickinson

ASTRA of AHC ADVISOR: Melinda Aguirre