



# The St. Augustine Altrusan

Newsletter for Altrusa International of St. Augustine, Inc.

Editor: Linda Herrera

## President's Message:

Hello Altrusans,

Happy New Year to each of you. I hope you are all keeping warm and healthy! We have exciting new projects for 2026. We will be hosting a rededication of the Altrusa Club Bicentennial project in St. Francis Park on April 11, 2026. We will make the 50 year anniversary the park's establishment, Altrusa International's 119th birthday, and Altrusa St. Augustine's 64th birthday. Please save the date and join us for the festivities.

I hope you enjoyed our new meeting location at the Ponce Hotel on US1. We have a separate meeting room that is quiet with full access to the restaurant. Please let me know your thoughts on the place, food, and service.

We enjoyed a lovely visit from Dimple Overstreet, former District 3 Governor, in January. We also welcomed two new club members at that meeting. Congratulations to Sherrie Rinehart and Carole Prior.

I encourage each of you to step forward in 2026 and enthusiastically engage in our community through our service projects, volunteer work, and literacy goals. Our individual efforts may seem small, but together we make a positive difference in the world. Please let your Altrusan ideals shine a bright light throughout St. Augustine and the world.

Yours in service,  
Vicki Sellner

### In This Issue:

President's Message	1
Tis' the Season	2
FUNraising	3
Segui Backpack Project	3
ASTRA	4
Dimple Overstreet	4
Christmas Party	4
Cookbook	4
Backpacks (cont.)	5
Mosquitoes	5
Wrapping Project	5
St. Francis Park	6
Invitation	6

Coming this Spring:

## Yard Sale

Please save your donations!

1

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Cheryl Jeffries Feb 4
- Brian Bowman Feb 22
- Vicki Sellner Feb 24
- Linda Herrera Mar 17
- Kristi Smith Apr 4

2

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**Altrusans in Harmony**  
**Always Sparkle**  
April 24-25, 2026  
Spartanburg, SC

3

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

6:30pm  
3rd Thursday each month  
Ponce Hotel, US1

4

### NEWSLETTER

Please send information, articles, & pictures to:  
[linda2herrera@yahoo.com](mailto:linda2herrera@yahoo.com)  
Call/text: (904) 540-6252

## Tis' the Season for LITERACY

by Mimi Cooper



It all started with Mrs. Claus, aka Altrusan Mimi Cooper (pictured left) reading Christmas stories to children attending a fundraiser breakfast sponsored by St. Francis House and Port in the Storm. These two facilities are working with the homeless population in St. Augustine. The children were allowed to choose which book they wanted Mrs. Claus to read. A popular one was *How the Candy Cane Got Its Stripe* which focuses on kindness and friendship. Pictured below are St. Augustine High School ROTC volunteers, Santa and Mrs. Claus, and Altrusans Mimi Cooper and Chris Plant preparing books for the children to take home and enjoy. All families received *Kindness Stars*, our project to spread kindness throughout the community.



Our final seasonal literacy project was selling our cookbook, *What's Cookin' in St. Augustine?* We sold these at two different outdoor Christmas markets. The weather wasn't very cooperative; it was cold and foggy, but we still raised some money for our scholarship funds and had a great time telling folks all about our Altrusa club. We also gave *Kindness Stars* to all who stopped by our table.



## FUNdraising

Lottery basket raffles have proven to be a lot of fun & a great way to raise funds for our service projects. Our latest St. Patrick's Day basket holds \$250 worth of tickets, which are on sale now. Clay Willoughby held the winning ticket for the Halloween basket, while Vicki Sellner won the Christmas basket.



## Sebastian Segui Backpack Project Continues Success

The Sebastian Segui project was started by Altrusan Marciana Segui and her son Sebastian. Young Sebastian wanted gift other children the same things he enjoyed. Each month Marciana and her nephew Zachary go to the Homeless Coalition and deliver a birthday backpack for each child having a birthday that month. In October they got to meet one of the recipients and she agreed to have her picture taken with Zachary.



There were three birthdays in November. A big thank you to the donations from Marshalls (backpacks), Isabelle Howes & David Ferriero (books), Nancy & Dan Sansoucy (stuffed animals), and Patti High (a handmade children's quilt). Zachary is pictured with Marion Blohm, case manager for the Coalition.



Marciana and Zachary delivered one backpack in December. Thank you to all our benefactors: Marshalls (backpack), an anonymous donor (pajamas & book), and Dan & Nancy Sansoucy (stuffed animal).



January was a big month with eight birthdays to celebrate. Donations were made by Marshalls (backpacks), Lisa's Libraries (books), Cheryl Jeffries & Linda Herrera (PJs), Dan & Nancy Sansoucy (stuffed animals), Holly Wampler (clothes & shoes), and Sebastian Segui (shoes & diapers).

If you wish to donate to this project, we have set up an Amazon wish list at <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3N00U32N96PIW>

*Continued on page 5.*

**ASTRA**

Students in the ASTRA Club at St John's Academy are actively participating in several projects as well as volunteer work. We are so very proud of you! Members are learning leadership skills and focusing on writing grants & service projects like mentoring mourner students.



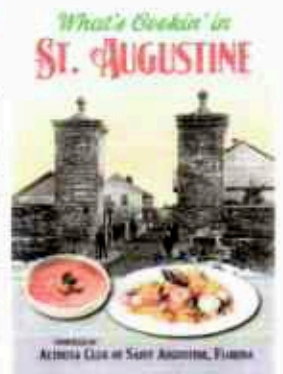
**Dimple Overstreet** (center) visited with the Altrusa Club of St. Augustine in January. She cheerfully shared her encouragement and wisdom with everyone. She is pictured here with Vicki Sellner, president, and Brian Bowman, vice president.

**Altrusa Christmas Party Combines Celebration and Service**  
Members enjoyed a lovely meal and fellowship in December. Donations in lieu of presents were for Port in the Storm. Pictured (left to right): Chris Plant, Cheryl Jeffries, Linda Herrera, Vicki Sellner, Brian Bowman, Louise Bowman, Patty & Ed Wallace.



**What's Cookin' in St. Augustine?**

If you're looking for a new recipe or something unique to serve, you should try our cookbook. It's full of local recipes, beautiful drawings of historic sites in St. Augustine, and even Queen Elizabeth's personal scone recipe. Copies are available at the Fountain of Youth gift shop or from any club member.



Pictured from left to right: Mimi Cooper, Louise Bowman, Linda Herrera, and Chris Plant at the Hastings Festival selling cookbooks & other items.



### Backpack Project (cont. from page 3)

Marciana & Zachary Segui delivered 4 backpacks for February to the Homeless Coalition. Each birthday bag contained a small backpack along with the usual items. The backpacks were donated by Marshalls; 2 books (pictured here) were donated by Catherine S. McGinnis through the Amazon wishlist and 2 books were donated by Lisa's Libraries; the stuffed animals were donated by Dan and Nancy Sansoucy; and 2 pajamas were donated through the Amazon wishlist by an anonymous donor and David Ferriero. THANK YOU, donors!



### What Do Mosquitoes Have To Do With Literacy?



Altrusans Mimi Cooper and Chris Plant accompanied children and staff of the Early Learning Services program of St. Johns County Schools on an outing to the Disease Vector Learning Center. They learned all about the life cycle of mosquitoes as well as how to control their numbers. Over 60 books as well as all of Mimi's *Kindness Stars* were given to the youngsters.



### Christmas Wrapping Project

Altrusans answered the call to help wrap hundreds of Christmas presents for children in the St. Johns County School District Early Learning Programs. Mimi Cooper (not pictured) led the charge and was helped by Louise Bowman, Chris Mars, Wendy Delfosse (pictured below), and Linda Herrera. Staff members joined the celebration.



## St. Francis Park to be Rededicated by Altrusa Club of St. Augustine Mamie L. Bass Award Winning Project Celebrates 50 Year Anniversary

“An inviting park at the southern end of St. Augustine is the Bicentennial project set by the Altrusa Club of St. Augustine, a 15-year-old community service organization,” is the way Anne Carling, Women’s Editor for *The St. Augustine Record*, 1974, described the club’s undertaking which would win the prestigious Mamie L. Bass Award. The heritage project was sanctioned by the St. Augustine Commission for the National Bicentennial, Inc. The plaza is located at the corner of St. George and St. Francis Streets and boasts a fountain (pictured below), a statue of St. Francis, and a dedication plaque (pictured below).

Altrusa members spent hours and hours raising funds for the park. One of the many money-making projects was the *What’s Cookin’ in St. Augustine?* cookbook that we revised and brought back last year. The club raised over \$6,000 dollars to establish the park and spent countless hours on this endeavor.

Come and be a part of history as we gather to rededicate St. Francis Park and celebrate Altrusa International’s 119th birthday and Altrusa International of St. Augustine’s 64th birthday on Saturday, April 11th, 2026, at 11:00 am.

Altrusa International of St Augustine

Cordially Invites You to the

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dedication of

St Francis Park

Corner of St George and

St Francis Streets

St Augustine, FL

Saturday, April 11, 2026

11 AM

\*\*\*\*\*

St Francis Park was a Bicentennial Project of

Altrusa International of St Augustine

