



Mamie L Bass Service Award

Entry Form

District: **NINE**

Name of Altrusa Club **Altrusa International of Richardson**
Address **PO Box 832101**
City **Richardson State TX**
Country **USA** Zip/Postal Code **75083-2101**
Contact Person **Samanthia Slaight**
Telephone **214-507-6140** Email: **sslaight52@gmail.com**
Date (day. Month, year): **30/6/21**
Club Membership (as of entry date): **69**

Project Title: **Ability House**

Abilily House
Name of Project

Nomination for Mamie L Bass Service Award

June 30, 2021
Date

Altrusa International of **Richardson**
PO Box 832101
Richardson, Texas 75081
USA

District Nine
2020-2021

Executive Summary / Synopsis:

A 60-word count synopsis of your project providing brief outline of key aspects of the project. This synopsis will not be counted towards the project description count and will not affect submission eligibility. The synopsis will be used if your awards is selected as the winning entry.

Synopsis for Mamie L. Bass Service Award

Ability House is a six resident Cerebral Palsy facility with Ability Connection. Altrusa Richardson's aim is to assist the home in happiness projects for the residence as well as the staff. Working as a committee, or in conjunction with other committees, thorough gift giving, party planning, through interaction and field trips.

Project Description: *(1,000-word limit)*

Altrusa Ability House Project Description

The aim of our Ability House project remains the same as it was when our first Committee Chair, Nancy Rhom said in 1914. It is a “hands on” challenging service project. By which we enrich the lives of six Cerebral Palsy residents and help to fill a need left by the State or lack of family. Fulfilling Birthday wishes and adding a little “magic” to the lives of sweet souls who have been left behind, outliving parents and family, if they ever had them. In our actions we also support the few families left behind as well as the Caregivers

To carry out this endeavor, the committee depends on all of the club for support. Through budgeting, gifts, creativity and attendance of as many of our sister’s as possible and teaming with other committees

We begin with a budget proposal that is given to the finance committee with a breakdown of parties with dates and times including birthdays and seasonal celebrations. These are itemized with food cost, paper product and decorations, gifts for residents or others such as the Caregivers at Christmas. Any extraneous needs like outdoor lights and decorations for Christmas and if there is a special need for the house itself. The committee

meets to discuss the event dates, look through our party box and take inventory of our costume boxes and assign members to the breakdown of jobs and gift buying. I was a Chef and Director of Catering for over 35 years and my gift or donation is a specialty birthday cake for each resident per their wants each year. Many of our Altrusa Sisters find this committee a wonderful opportunity to continue to donate In Kind through the years even after they have moved on from this committee. At the beginning of this year, we were able to purchase a new dishwasher for the house that was badly needed. In doing this, our friends at Lowes helped with the cost and also put Ability House on their list for returns donations that are passed on to Ability House as well as their umbrella organization Ability Connection!

Altrusa Richardson requires a mid-year and end of year report for each service committee, but we also give updates at business meetings and in the meeting agendas. In accordance with this, especially though out the pandemic, the committee chair sent out periodic email updates on the status of the residents and the ability to enter the home. We had to get very creative and do many things at the dinning room window and front door. It was challenging in the beginning of the pandemic! It was upsetting to the residents who have come to know and love us that we could not come in and hug them and laugh with them. It was also upsetting to see us all with mask on that they did not understand. Then, when their own few, sisters and brothers could not enter the home, it got pretty bad and we have to get creative!

Our committees banded together and we did puppet shows, and singsongs at the windows. We all worked as a club to create a Christmas Winter Wonderland in the front yard of the home and a new Christmas tree and stockings and gifts and treats! We enlisted Home Depot and Lowes to help with donated blow-up decorations for the yard and lights and connections.

All of the Altrusa club sent Christmas cards and St. Patrick's Day cards and cards of encouragement! Then, the worst happened! All the residents came down with Covid 19 and the first resident was sent to the hospital.

We stayed in touch with Landon Cole, Charity and Volunteer Manager for Ability Connection, as well as the Caregivers and the few family members that stay involved with their siblings.

When the year is normal, Altrusa Richardson Ability House Committee and the club do wonderful things for this special home. This last year was a struggle, because of Covid. But we didn't give up! The community and club members stepped up and we all worked together to ensure that these sweet, forgotten souls had joy in their lives. From Super Hero birthday cakes to fulfilling every birthday and Christmas gift wish! New dishwasher to make their lives a little easier to letting them know we haven't forgotten them and can't wait to see them and hug them again! Lowes and Home Depot know us by name as do so many others who have helped. They have sent people to us with needs and we have sent them on to Landon Cole to find a place for them at Ability Connection. We have been to the open houses and Black and White Balls to also put the Altrusa name out there.

We are still finding innovative ways to promote Altrusa through Ability House and Ability Connection.

Our residents are, Nina, she's a little but country, Vera, Nina's best friend for twenty years, she's a little but Motown, Kathleen, who cannot speak but she will untie your shoes and laugh and laugh! Shelly my little mermaid, Henry, Mr. Bo Jangles loves to laugh and beat time to the music and Robert. Robert has never been able to speak a word. He is 38 and still loves Casper and Spiderman! Robert has a new speaking computer he is learning to use. Do you know what the first words were that he spoke? Tell Altrusa, this is what I want for my birthday! I have six pages! Robert has never had any family. He has lived in silence, all of his life in a facility with only caregivers.....we do this, for them.

PLEASE NOTE:

Optional Supplemental Material (No points) Judges place primary importance on the written narrative. Substantiating materials do not earn points and are considered only in a supplementary perspective.

ENTRY SUBMISSION:

Submit your entry by **June 30, 2021** to
District Nine Director Guadalupe Carvajal via email:

gvcarvajal@yahoo.com

ABILITY HOUSE UPDATE

Ability House Committee

By Rosemary Gouger, Committee Chair

Robert's Casper the Ghost birthday party was great! I hooked up with Achaia, the tall, lovely caregiver from the Congo. She took pictures for us since we cannot go inside the house. She is an angel and when I thanked her for helping us with everything, she responded that it is "her honor" to serve the residents and to help us as we help them. Our "Shero" for Robert's birthday was Alma Benoit who got all of his cool presents. We had to celebrate outside in the yard but had a good time anyway. We all learned or relearned and sang the old Harvey Cartoon theme song for Casper and Happy Birthday at the window for him while they all cheered. Everyone was in great spirits.

The new dishwasher was delivered in July. It's a 2020 Maytag (my research says this model is the top rated for dependability). A special thank you goes to Ann Payne and her husband, who graciously donated \$225.00 of the bill to help Ability House and save our budget. While working with Tammy in the large appliance department of Richardson's Lowes we struck up a conversation about where the new dishwasher was going. Tammy asked me if we would like to be on their donations email for any surplus items that Lowes can donate. Of course, we said "YES". I have since received an email telling us that there are items to share. I called Landon Cole from Ability Connection to find out what we needed to do, and met hm at Lowes to introduce him to Tammy. There were lots of interior moldings, a large area rug, lots of five gal. buckets of paint and interior doors available. Tammy was also working on a microwave and a Bosch dishwasher to add to the available donation items. Tammy says that Ability House will be her new "favorite" charity. Tammy also helps get donations for an Autistic center that she and her mother work at as well. Tammy at Lowes is our new "Shero", too.



Robert (left) and Henry (right) impatiently wait for cake



Robert (left) enjoys cake but keeps his eye on his presents



(L-R) Henry, Shelly, Kathleen and Vera enjoy cake, ice cream and soda



(Pictured L-R) Robert, Henry, Shelly, Kathleen and Vera. Nina is out of the shot at left front



Robert's Casper Cake



The three photos above show the new Maytag dishwasher being installed

ABILITY HOUSE UPDATE

A Kindly, Ghostly Halloween Puppet Show for Ability House

By Rosemary Gouger, Committee Chair

On October 17, 2020, our amazingly dramatic and talented Altrusans put on a puppet show for our dear friends at Ability House. Our friends at Ability House have not been able to get out since the beginning of the year due to the pandemic. We performed in the yard so that the residents could enjoy the entertainment safely through the open windows. There were lots of laughs and fun, silly ghostly sounds. The ghosts, named for our Ability friends, Robert, Vera, Shelly, Henry, Kathleen, and Nina, all decided that Halloween was another opportunity to spread kindness, not scariness.

And to top it off, we had a guest interested in Ability House and experiencing what Altrusa is all about!. Kudos to all involved!



(L-R) Rosemary Gouger, Mona Roumani, Gayle Ingle, Deb Bourland, Carol R., Christine Hart, and Jane Merz



(L-R) Mary Beth McLemore, Cindy McIntyre, Laura Trainor-Collins, Alma Benoit, Gerry Carron, Susan Fischer



Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

March 6 🌐

It's a beautiful day for #AltrusaRichardson to celebrate Kathleen's birthday 🎉🎂💜🎈 at Ability House, where the residents are like family to Richardson Altrusans. Big thank you to Rosemary Gouger for the cupcakes and Deb Bourland for the wonderful gifts. Kathleen and her sister, Dorothy, enjoyed the celebration along with her Altrusa Sisters. 🎉





Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

December 15, 2020 🌐

Santa's Elves (aka Richardson Altrusans) spread holiday cheer at Ability House with festive outside decor, gorgeous Christmas tree and presents inside. Wishing everyone a safe and healthy holiday season!



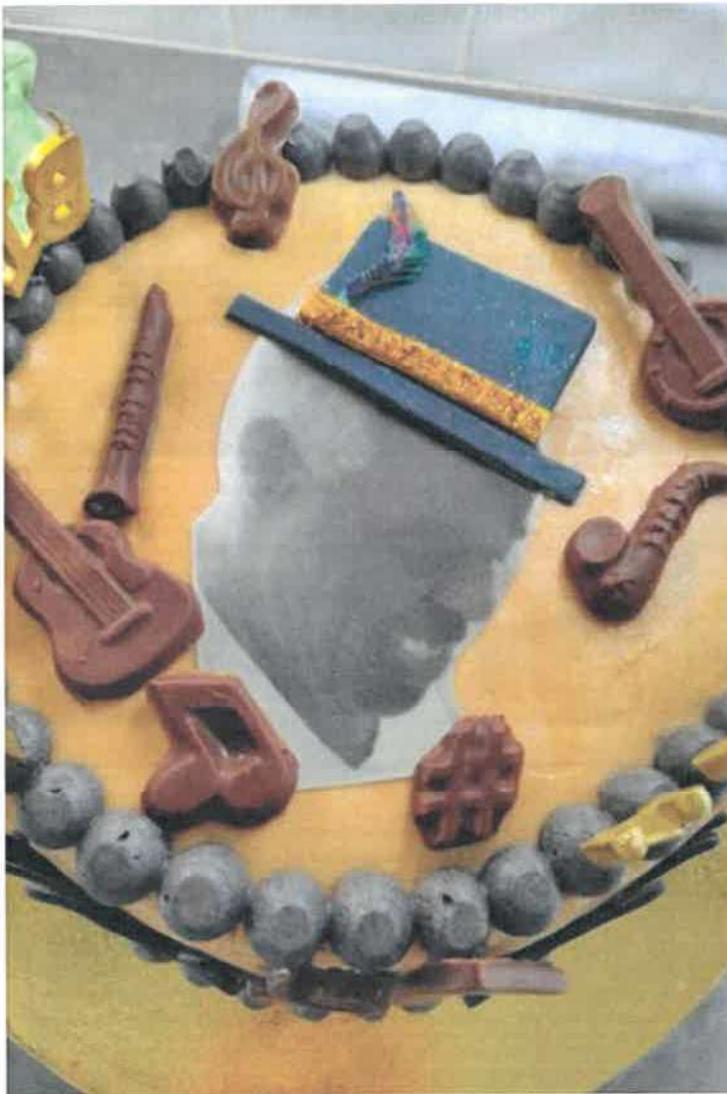


Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

March 20 🌐

It's a great day for a Motown 🎵 🎶 🎷 Musical Birthday Celebration for Henry! #AltrusaRichardson come out to sing happy birthday and share in the festivities. Henry was thrilled by his gifts 🎁 of Motown CDs and a keyboard to make his own 🎵 🎶 🎷 music, thanks to Bobbi Klein. And Rosemary Gouger made another deliciously unique cake 🍰 with Henry's electric smile on top complete with chocolate 🎵 🎶 🎷 🎸 musical notes and instruments.

🎁 🎁 🎁 #AbilityConnection





Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

March 6 🌐

Happy birthday, Vera, from your #AltrusaRichardson family! 🎉 🎂 🎁 🎈
Vera loves dolls and was thrilled to get lots of goodies and a Tiana Princess doll for her "Princess and The Frog" themed birthday party! Rosemary Gouger did an outstanding job with cake and decorations. Everyone had a great time celebrating. 🎊 #AbilityConnection

