



Thank you for your kindness.

Acknowledging Acts of Kindness Club Newsletter

December 2024

“A warm smile is the universal language of kindness”.

It's hard to believe that the Christmas season is just around the corner, so let me be one of the first to wish you all Happy Holidays.

We have a lot of exciting things happening this coming year that we will get into in this newsletter. But first a reminder:

Our next meeting is on Thursday, December 12th at 12:30 at Bacall Rec Center. We will have our annual Christmas gathering which, as always, will involve some great food. You are invited to bring an appetizer if you can. We will also have a speaker from “Feed Our Starving Children” who will show a video and explain this wonderful event which we will be a part of in January.

We will also discuss some of the upcoming activities, changes in our Board, and some of the kind acts that you have recently observed.

Welcome to Our New Members

Sally Marshall – Woodbury

Pam Sadler – Hemingway

Kathy Conforti – Sabel Chase

Lany Gardner – Mallory

Pat and Mike Webb – Tamarin Grove

Jaquie Fields

Changes in Our Board

Our VP, Jen Smith, and our Treasurer, Linda Martin, will be leaving their positions at the end of the year. They have both been tremendous assets to our club and will be dearly missed. Thank you for all you have done to help our club thrive. Jen Smith will be our Outreach Coordinator. She has a tremendous number of connections and will be helping us to get involved in several kindness opportunities throughout the year.

Kathy Cohen will be taking over as Vice President and Barbara Bickley will be our new Treasurer. Cathi Coy will be taking on the function of Candidate Selection and Event Coordination for Barbara. In this position she will be helping to select those we honor for their kindness and arranging the events.

Giving Clubs Showcase

Our club sponsors two of these showcases each year, one in the north at Lake Miona in February and one in the south at Ezell in October. These showcases give clubs and organizations in The Villages a chance to show how they spread kindness in our community. We have between 50 and 70 clubs at these, and they are always highly successful and well attended. We had our fall one at Ezell on October 26th which was very successful.

Our next one will be on Saturday, Feb 1st from 10-2 at Lake Miona Recreation Center. Save the date! Our next fall one will be at Everglades Rec Center (date tba).

Acknowledging Acts of Kindness (AAOK) Events

The goal for 2025 is to get back on track with our monthly acknowledgments. We have several candidates in line and one scheduled on January 7th. This is a great way to be involved in a club activity which is quick and fun. And, if you know of someone who we should honor just contact me or our new Event Coordinator, Cathi Coy, at cathy@coy.com and we will make sure it happens.

Educational Focus Group

One of the most exciting things we have going on now is our Educational Focus group led by Pearl Seavitte. She will update us on the activities of this group at our meeting. This is such a great part of realizing our mission of creating a culture of kindness. Is there a better place to start than working with our school children and helping them lead a life of kindness? Consider the possibilities!

Defeat the Cold Sock Drive

The sock drive was an amazing success! Jen Smith organized this with our club and Abundance of Love. The goal was to get several hundred sock donations to those in need. The result was more like several thousand. Thanks to all who made this such a success. See the attached for where these socks were distributed. Jen will give us an update at our meeting.

Our thanks to all of you who contributed to this. One of our members, Cathi Coy, had a very creative approach.



Upcoming Activities

Here are some of the special activities we have planned for the near future. You can let me know now by return response if you would like to be involved or wait till the meeting when we will have sign-up sheets. We'd love to see a lot of you involved.

Gateway to Hope Christmas Party – Saturday, Dec 14th at 1:30

This year we provided Christmas presents for 29 kids from 19 Veteran families living in the Ocala Forest. This is something we should be very proud of, and our thanks to all of you who were involved. You are also invited to the party on Saturday, Dec 14th which is a wonderful experience! See the attached flyer for more information.



Wreaths Across America at Florida's National Cemetery

This event is also on Dec 14 and takes place at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell. We have 4 members who have signed up for this, but they are able to welcome as many volunteers as possible who show up. If you are interested, go to their website at [Wreaths Across America](#) or their Facebook site:

facebook.com/wreathsassamericabushnell.

Feed Our Starving Children

January 15th, 2025, 2-4, at Live Oaks Church,

As a prelude to this event, we will be having a "Changing a Life with Your Change" event at our December meeting. This is a unique, creative way of raising funds for Feed Our Starving Children. Find out more about this at our next meeting.

The event will take place at Live Oaks Community Church, 1270 CR 103 in Oxford (behind Walmart). This is the second year we have done this, and our members who participated raved about it. We will have a signup sheet at the meeting and, if you can't make the meeting just let me know you would like to participate.

Fundraiser – February or March.

Still early, but we think we may have a very exciting and different possibility. We would love to have someone help us arrange the event. Let us know,

St Pat's Day parade – March 17, 2025

Always a fun activity which will take place on St Pat's Day at Spanish Springs. We will likely have our usual 8 carts and 20 or so walkers.



Flags for Fallen Vets – Prior to Memorial Day in May.

This is a chance to place flags at Veteran's graves at the Florida National Cemetery. Just an amazing experience! More on this as we get closer to the date.



Membership Downsizing

We currently have a membership list of 156. About half of those on our list have never been to a meeting or participated in an activity. If you no longer want to be a part of our club just let me know and I will remove you. We will be sending emails out to those we haven't heard from in the next weeks to get your status.

Areas Where We Need Your Help.

We could use your help in several areas. I know many of you are busy, but we could really use some help in these areas. None of them will take a lot of your time.

- Social Director – Help organize events involving food and social activities. You won't be alone – a lot of us will help you out.
- Website Manager – Update our website (AAOKClub.org) from time to time. Not a lot of time will be required. Minimal experience needed – we will train.
- Newsletter Editor – I've been doing this for 6 years. Time for someone else to take over.
- Fundraiser manager. Carry out a few tasks to arrange for the once-a-year event. You'll have lots of help.

Let me know if you are interested or would like to know more about a position. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

If any of these possibilities sound good to you or if you would like more detailed information, contact me at lindsaycollier@comcast.net.

Club Sites to Visit

- **Our club's website**
- **[Our Facebook page](#)**
- **Our Facebook group**
- **Custom Apparel** (go to businesses/groups A-L for our catalogue of shirts and other AAOK stuff)

See you on December 12th!

Stay Healthy, Happy and Kind!

Lindsay Collier, President, lindsaycollier@comcast.net.

