



Thank you for your kindness.

Acknowledging Acts of Kindness Club Newsletter - June 2025

*"Kind hearts are the gardens. Kind thoughts are the roots. Kind words are the blossoms.
Kind deeds are the fruits."*

Kirpal Singh

Our June meeting will be the last of our 2024-2025 year. As usual we will celebrate our success with an ice cream social. Come and join us for some fun activities and lots of goodies along with some fun activities and games. End our AAOK Club year with a smile! **Bing a topping for the ice cream if you can (whipped cream, chocolate/caramel/peanut butter sauce, nuts etc.)**

Welcome to Our New Members

A warm welcome to our new members:

- Alyse Cornell - Hickory Head Hammock
- Ed Adam
- Mary Beth Dunn
- Tory Palivoda - St Catherines
- Brenda Hein - Richmond
- Denise Kingaly

Our 2024-2025 Highlights

We've had an amazing year. Here is a summary of some of the things we have done:

- Orchestrated 2 Giving Clubs Showcases
- Participated in Flags for Fallen Vets and Wreaths Across America
- Took part in Feed My Starving Children
- Marched in the Christmas and St Pat's Day parades
- Bought Christmas gifts for 19 families of Veterans living in the forest
- Attended the Christmas party for Gateway to Hope/Project SOS for Veterans
- Donated to Honor Flight and Project SOS
- Donated socks for the 'DeFeet the Cold' project

- Donated shoes for "Follow the Need" to women of Nepal to start businesses
- Helped in the Wildwood Soup Kitchen
- Acknowledged a record number of incredibly kind people
- And more!

Acknowledging Acts of Kindness (AAOK) Events ^u

Our VP and Candidate Selection and Event Coordination Leader, Cathi Coy, has put together a list of upcoming AAOK's through October so there will be lots of opportunities to join us in these events. These are fun and consume very little of your time (a normal AAOK takes about 15 minutes). We promise you will leave feeling good all over. Contact Cathi if you would like to be involved or if you have someone you'd like to nominate for their amazing kindness. Cathi can be reached at cathia@coy.org.

It's been a busy couple of months for these events. On May 22nd we honored Peter Russell who was responsible for making VHA (Villagers Homeowners Advocates) what it is today and worked tirelessly to build Shared Harvest, The Villages community garden that grew and donated over 27,000 lbs. of produce to the needy in 2024.



We had a very exciting acknowledgment in the past week. On Wednesday, June 4th we honored Van Bui Thompson at the AOL Fundraiser. Van has an amazing story which includes being imprisoned by the Viet Gong and escaping from Communist Vietnam. She has led a life of giving back ever since to include serving as a cultural ambassador and raising money for groups like the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1036, the Rotary Club of The Villages, and relief efforts for Ukraine refugees.



We also have another one coming up on June 21st at 8:45 am at Bridgeport Rec Center for a candidate with one of the most amazing stories of kindness. Let Cathi (cathi@coy.org) know if you would like to be involved in this – it'll make your day!

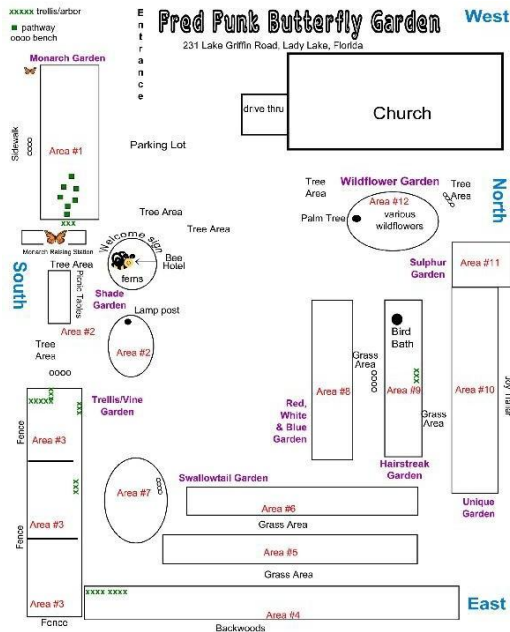
Butterfly Garden

A few weeks ago several of us participated in cleaning up several sections of the Fred Funk Butterfly Garden. We were so impressed that we asked if we could adopt one and, voila, we now are caretakers of the backwoods garden (area 4). At the present there are just 4 of us, so here is an opportunity to be involved in being kind to the earth. It will take very little of

your time and give you a chance to spend time among the butterflies in this beautiful place. **Let me know if you are interested.**

The garden is located at 231 Lake Griffin Rd, in Lady Lake behind the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Visit it if you can for a wonderful experience. Any day but Saturday since this is their Sabbath. On July 23rd there will be a Butterfly Fest starting at 10:00 which would be a great day for you to see the garden. Our club will have a table at this event and let us know if you would like to help out with this table





For a list of plants, see our Butterfly Club website:
<https://sites.google.com/view/lvbgclub/garden-mapplants>

Flags for Fallen Vets

On Sunday, May 25th, a few of us participated in Flags for Fallen Vets at the Florida National Cemetery. This is one of the most exciting and heart-warming events of the year. We were disappointed as to the low number of members taking part and hope to do better next year.





By-Laws

A few years ago, we took the first shot at developing our by-laws. Our amazing Board of Directors recently updated this, and it will be available soon for all members. This will be posted on our website when completed.

Educational Focus Group

This Focus Group led by Pearl Seavitte has made some great progress in bringing our message of kindness to our local schools. Peggy Cunningham and Jeri Fraser have had some great success at the Webster Elementary School with the "Bee Kind Program". Come to our meeting to learn more about some of the wonderful things they are doing.

Giving Clubs Showcase

It seems like a long way away but save the date on your calendar for our bi-annual Giving Clubs Showcase. It will be on Saturday, October 25th from 10-2 at Everglades Recreation Center. We plan on having over 50 clubs and groups, some that are new for us. We normally have 2 members at the table each hour so let me know if you would like to be involved.





Kindness Opportunities

Our Outreach Coordinator, Jen Smith, has been doing a wonderful job providing kindness opportunities for our members. There is probably no place on earth that has more opportunities to spread kindness. Come to the meeting to find more about these.

Website Updates

Chris Coy has been doing a great job of making some changes that will ease navigation, enhance the club information, and make everything easier to find. Here are some of the things you will now find on the site:

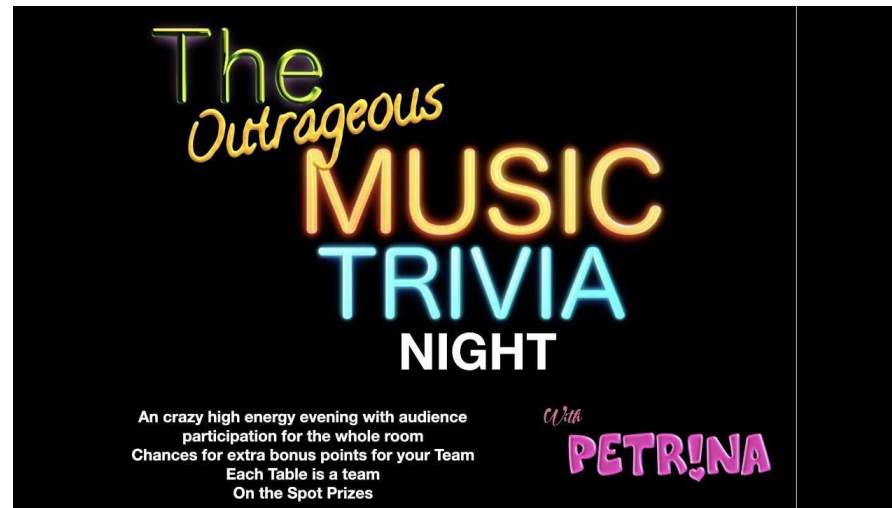
- All newsletters will be there with the current one posted on the "Home" page.
- All kindness presentations will be easily accessed.
- Our calendar will include all our upcoming events.
- The form for nominating those to be acknowledged will be easy to download.
- And much more!

Thanks so much, Chris, for your help! Keep checking the site at aaokclub.org for more updates and pass it on to others.

Fundraiser

Here's another date to save. We have a very exciting fundraiser coming up in November with Petrina and her **Crazy Trivia Show**. For those who have never seen Petrina perform, you will be in for a real treat. The date is Saturday, November 8th at 6:00 pm at the Colony Recreation Center. Our fundraiser will help us carry out our events, and also to contribute to other groups we support such as Project SOS, Honor Flight, and more.

We could really use a few volunteers to help us with this. Please let me know if you can help.



Our Kindness Cards

When we started our club 6 years ago, we were all about handing out our kindness cards to people we spotted doing kind acts. This is still one of our strengths. Every time you acknowledge someone increases the chance they will continue their kind acts. People love to be recognized, and it makes you feel great too.

We always have plenty of cards at the meeting and, if you can't make the meeting, let me know how many you want, and we will figure out how to get them to you.



Areas Where We Need Your Help.

We could use your help in a couple of 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.
- Newsletter Editor – I've been doing this for 6 years. Time for someone else to take over.

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

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 June 12th

Stay Healthy, Happy and Kind!

Lindsay Collier, President, lindsaycollier@comcast.net.