



Acknowledging Acts of Kindness Club Newsletter

December 2021

Our next club meeting is on Thursday, December 9th at 12:30 at the Bacall Recreation Center. Get there a little early for some refreshments. We have a lot of things to share and discuss and two wonderful speakers as well. Dick Boyden and Joan Bender have formed Our Moment Café, a monthly café program which provides a safe and supportive environment for caregivers and the ones they care for with early stage memory loss, Alzheimer's disease and dementia to help them socialize and have fun with others. Their work is a wonderful story of kindness and dedication!

Our November AOK

On November 8th we had the honor of acknowledging Marie Bogdonoff, the Founder and CEO of Villagers for Veterans. Ten of us showed up (a record!) at her Bingo fundraiser at the Wildwood Community Center on November 8th to honor her for her exceptional kindness with over 200 in attendance. A special thanks to Judy Samuelson for her help.

Marie works tirelessly in her quest to help veterans in need in our area. She was instrumental in raising funds to provide a home for SGT Pam Kelly, a paralyzed

Veteran, in Orange Blossom Gardens, has raised funds for training service dogs for Vets, orchestrates fundraisers for Christmas celebrations for children of veterans living in the Ocala Forest, and much more. She was also the main driving force for Ashley's House, an all-female veteran transition home which will open soon in Eustis, Florida.

We were also honored to have Marie as our speaker at the November meeting where she shared her amazing story. **A big thanks to Marie for all you do for our veterans!**



We have tentative acknowledgement events planned for December and January. We invite you to be a **Kindness Whistle Blower** if you have someone in mind that deserves one of our monthly acknowledgments. You can download the form for submitting your request on our website at aaokclub.org or just pick up one at the meeting.

Our monthly Acknowledgement Events are one of the most exciting things we do. We have a lot of fun doing these and we are always looking for people to be involved. **Any member can be a part of these events.** Our Candidate Selection and Event Coordination Focus Group does all the work and we would love to have

other members play a part in these events. They take little time and are very rewarding.

Also, if you know of any potential speakers for our meetings who are engaged in kind acts, please let us know.

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome to our new members:

- Jan Masterson - Mallory Square
- Elaine Perrotto - Gilchrest
- Linda and Ron Stephen – Santiago
- Rosemary Cholette – St. Catherine

Upcoming Events

➤ Christmas Parade

On Saturday, December 11th the annual Villages Christmas Parade will take place at noon at the Polo Field. This is one of the year's best events and our club will be marching in it for the second time. Our plan is to have 4 golf carts and 10 walkers and we have 4 carts and 4 walkers at this point. If you are interested in being a walker please respond. The activity is a lot of fun! Two walkers will be carrying our banner up front and the others will walk along handing out cards and Kindness Rocks. The parade is one mile around the Polo Field. Respond if you are interested.

➤ Wreaths Across America

On Saturday, December 18th at 10:39 am we will participate in [Wreaths Across America](#) at the Florida National Cemetery. This past Memorial Day we had several of us placing flags on graves and it was an incredibly moving experience. We have 4 of us currently and, if you are interested, you can sign up for site #1 at the following [website](#). We will form carpools to the site.

➤ **February Fundraiser**

We are planning a fundraiser on February 18th, 2022 at 6 pm at the Rohan Recreation Center. It will be a “Not Your Grandma’s Bingo” with Ric Mitchell and should be a real blast. Save the date and we will let you know more about this at the meeting.

➤ **Ocala Veteran’s Children’s Christmas Party**

On Saturday, Dec 11th there will be a Christmas party for the children of veterans in the Ocala Forest sponsored by Project SOS (Support Our Soldiers). Jen and Terry Smith, Margaret and Bob Wolfe, and Jean and Lindsay Collier are contributing gifts for selected children. More about this at the meeting.

Education Focus Group

We have an Educational Focus Group to collaborate with local schools to encourage students and staff to use our process of acknowledging acts of kindness. This group, under the leadership of Margaret Wolfe, has been doing an outstanding job during a relatively difficult period. **Just think of the possible impact on our future in helping kids learn how to live lives of kindness!**

They have distributed 3500 cards to schools in Lake Panasoffkee, Webster, South Sumter, Fruitland Park, and Lady Lake. They are also working on Villages Charter, Bushnell, and Wildwood schools. Margaret will update us on this effort at our upcoming meeting.

The Lady Lake Elementary School has a particularly innovative use of our Kindness Cards which Margaret will review at our meeting. It’s a chance for some of you to get involved in a very exciting monthly activity at the school.

Club Shirts, Hats, Nametags, and More

Custom Apparel in the Publix Plaza on 466 has a catalog of products with our club logo. This includes men’s and women’s Tee and polo shirts, full zipper fleeces, nametags, masks, totes, and hats. And the prices are very reasonable. Their

catalogue can be seen at [aaokclub merchandise](#) and you can order on line if desired. Visit them today and checkout their great selections so you can show our AAOK Club colors.

Updating Membership

If you are getting this newsletter you are on our membership list. There are a good number of folks on this list that we have not heard from at all. **If you no longer want to be listed as a member please let us know.** We understand how busy so many of us are – retirement can be a lot of work.

Social Events

From time to time we like to have some social events for the purpose of getting to know one another and just having fun. In the past we have had Himalayan golf, gatherings at restaurants, etc. If you have any ideas for future social events, please let us know.

Kindness Certificates

Our Certificates of Kindness are another very easy way we use to acknowledge acts of kindness. If you have someone you know who has shown exceptional kindness you can use this to acknowledge them. If you would like to do this let me know (lindsaycollier@comcast.net) and I will work with you to make it happen.



Website and Facebook Sites

We have a terrific website (AAOKClub.org). Visit this often to see the latest events and news. Our blog is a way of sharing interesting articles on kindness, and **we invite you all to contribute to this**. The latest blogs include articles from two of our members and a story of kindness that will bring tears to your eyes. If you have something you would like to share sent it to aaokclub@gmail.com and we will make sure it is added (with your name of course). While you are on the site check out the latest blogs and enjoy.

We also have a Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/AcknowledgingActsOfKindness>

and a Facebook group at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2392926004127163>

Check them out, give a big like, post some good stuff, and share it with as many as you can! You will find a lot of interesting examples of kindness on these sites.

See you on December 9th!

Stay Healthy, Happy and Kind!

Lindsay Collier, President, Lindsaycollier@comcast.net

