



Acknowledging Acts of Kindness Club Newsletter

November 2021

Our next meeting is on Thursday, November 11th, at 12:30 at the Bacall Recreation Center.

We will have a wonderful speaker, Marie Bogdonoff, CEO of *Villagers For Veterans* and it's Veteran's Day – what great timing! Marie will be giving us an overview of some of the wonderful and kind things her group is doing for Veterans and their families.

We also have a lot of exciting events to share with you which I know you will enjoy. We will begin as usual with our popular happy/sad exercise so don't forget to bring a couple of one dollar bills. Also bring along any stories you would like to share of kind acts you have observed.

New Members

In our October meeting we had nine new members. A warm welcome to:

- ✚ Maria Dekimpe – Hadley
- ✚ Cindy Warner – Hadley
- ✚ Diana Faris – Sabal Chase
- ✚ Valerie Juno Vingalls – Pennecamp
- ✚ Jacklyn Witthoft – Charlotte

- ✚ Gail Meloni – Santiago
- ✚ Louise Memard – Polo Ridge
- ✚ Cindy Sutorka – Collier
- ✚ Cathy Waters - Hacienda

AAOK Events

As you may know, we try to have at least one acknowledgement event every month to recognize someone who has shown exceptional kindness. We have an exciting event in November that 10 of our members will be a part of. We will tell you all about it at the meeting. Other exciting events are in the planning.

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. Our thanks to those of you who volunteered to play a part in the upcoming events. This is one of the best ways to become a part of our activities. It's fun, exiting, easy, and takes little time. Hopefully more of you will volunteer for future events.

We also have a process on our website for nominating someone you think should be honored for their kind acts (we call them **Kindness Whistle Blowers**). **Attached is a copy of this.** Send this information to aaokclub@gmail.com if you have a possible honoree in mind and we'll get the review process started.

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

Upcoming Fundraiser

We are scheduling our 2nd Fundraiser on February 18th, 2022 at 6pm at the Rohan Recreation Center so put that on your calendar. It will be, “Not Your Grandma’s Bingo” and will be a fun, music-filled evening hosted by Ric Mitchell, Professional DJ. We will give you more information on this soon.

Why have fundraisers? We decided to charge nothing for membership. Our expenses are fairly minimal which include costs for our AAOK events, business fliers, and miscellaneous costs for meetings etc. Joe Santoro supplies are Kindness Cards (thank you, Joe). We have no desire to maintain a large treasury and will be using much of it to make donations to various groups engaging in kind acts. We feel this is another way we can carry out our mission of creating a culture of kindness in our community. So far we have made the following donations with more in the offing:

- 🚩 Project SOS(Support Our Soldiers) - \$250
- 🚩 TriCounty Women’s Veterans - \$250
- 🚩 The Villages Elementary at Lady Lake (Kookies for Kindness) - \$100 (Thank you Margaret Wolfe for this)
- 🚩 Primary Elementary Literacy Center Leesburg - \$150 (Thank you Judy Samuelson for your involvement in this – see below).



Our Speaker in October

Our October speaker was Ann Bosler who gave a very nice overview of the Caring Neighbors program followed by a lot of questions. If you have any questions about this program contact her at AB.ultimateassistant@gmail.com.



We have some wonderful speakers planned for December and January and will tell you more about them at the meeting.

Educational Focus Group

We created 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. **Just think of the possible impact on our future of 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.

Honor Flight Event

On Wednesday, October 20th there was an Honor Flight with 65 WW2, Korean, and Viet Nam Veterans. We had a few members there to cheer the return and it was a wonderful, moving event! The next event will be in 2022 and will be the first of these involving all women Veterans. I hope we can have some better participation for this one.



Wreaths Across America

This past Memorial Day a few of us attended the flag placing ceremony at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell. This was an incredibly moving experience for us all. On Saturday, December 18th there will a Wreaths Across America event and we would like to have a good showing of our members there. The event will take place in the morning so, if possible, put that on your calendar. We will get details out soon.



February Birthday Bash

Our first meeting was on Valentine's Day 2019 which means we have a 3 year anniversary coming up. We will be working on plans to invite all our past honorees and having a meeting that will focus on all we have accomplished up to now. Put the February 10th meeting date on your calendar now – you won't want to miss this one. There may also be some goodies involved.

Business and Organization Fliers



We had some pretty good momentum going with our business and organization fliers program until the pandemic hit us. (Close to 30 flier stands). But we are ready to get going again on this. The original idea was to have a Business Flier Focus Group that would oversee the possibilities of where we could distribute these. We would like to get this group going so let us know if you would like to be a part of it.

Interaction with Other Villages Social Groups

As you know, The Villages has a lot of social groups and clubs. There are a lot of these that might want to know more about our club. We have a Power Point presentation that is available for anyone that tells our story and is a perfect way for any member to share information about our AOK Club with others. I have recently shared our story with a number of clubs to include Lions, Women's Teachers, General Federation of Women's Clubs, and more.

If you know of another social group that would like to know more about us and want this presentation let me know. If you feel more comfortable having us do it, we can arrange for that as well.

Kindness Cards and Card Stations



THANK YOU FOR YOUR POSITIVE ATTITUDE & KINDNESS

To promote a culture of kindness in your community please pass on this card.

FOR INFORMATION & FREE CARDS CONTACT US AT

aaokclub.org

Sponsored by SantoroFoundation.org

The giving out of our Kindness Cards is one of the things that make us stand out and the process goes a long way in promoting our mission of creating a culture of kindness. We have a good supply of these cards but the challenge is making sure you can get them when needed. They are always available at meetings, but we are now trying to set up card stations at strategic locations around The Villages to make it easy to get them as needed. We now have stations at the following locations:

Linda Riccardi's home in Alhambra at 2795 Privada Drive in **The Village of Alhambra**

Lindsay and Jean's home at 383 Awendaw Loop in The village of **Tall Trees**

Marie Anderson's home at 1073 Nichols Terrace in the village of **Virginia Trace**

Judy Samuelson's home at 1817 Ashwood Run in the village of **Pennecamp**

Amy and Anthony Donato's home at 5441 Reynolds Rd in the village of **Marsh Bend**

We are looking for a few others in the following areas:

- The Historical Area east of 441
- The area between 466 and 466A
- The far south area currently being developed.

The only requirement is to be yearlong resident and have a sheltered area to display the cards.

Also, our website includes the ability for users to request cards and we have had requests for nearly 800 cards from this. Most are from The Villages, but some are from other parts of the country. Linda Riccardi is handling the distribution of these cards, and our warm thanks to her for this.

Need for a Website Advisor

We are still in need of someone to be our Website Advisor. Our website is all set up but we need someone who can add information such as blogs, news items, newsletters, etc. All you need are some basic computer skills and we will supply you with some training from our website designer here in The Villages. This will take very little of your time. Please respond if you are interested.

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, 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.

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.

We now have a new design for these certificates that we will preview in our meeting. Our thanks to Jenny and Steve Robinson for their design!

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.

Updating Membership

If you are getting this newsletter you are on our membership list. We currently have over 150 members! 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 you are – retirement can be a lot of work.

See you on November 11th!

Stay Healthy, Happy and Kind!

Lindsay Collier, President, Lindsaycollier@comcast.net

