

“Newsletter” – 09/19/26”

In this week's Newsletter, I'm doing something a little different. I'm sharing something heavy on my heart. I hope you will all respond in a kind and caring way.

Thank you, Leesia (Editor)

As most of you know we visit with the residents every Monday at the Manatee River Assisted Living facility. While we are there we not only visit, but we file and paint nails, sing hymns, play games and have some very deep and meaningful conversations with these precious folks. The facility is broken down into sections, “regular” assisted living care unit, the men's unit and then the “memory care” unit. We service all three every Monday. However, the memory care unit really has touched our hearts. There are many reasons why, and I could write a book about it, but today I would like to tell you about one lady in particular that stands out, her name is Tracy. She is young. Only 59. She is beautiful. She is beyond sweet. She has a beautiful smile and an even more beautiful spirit. Her two favorite words are “Be Kind”. Every week when we see her she gives us the biggest hug and is always ready to be pampered. We hold her hand and walk her to the table. Sit her down, take her polish off and just put on whatever color we think she would like because she can't make that decision for herself. While doing her nails we ask “Miss Tracy, will you please sing us your favorite song?” She immediately

starts singing Amazing Grace in a voice as sweet as a nightingale. Sometimes a tear will roll down her cheek and I wonder what is making her sad? Or, perhaps that's a happy tear? She will never be able to tell me because she has full blown Alzheimer's. Yes, she is only 59. We asked the staff her back story. They didn't have much of one to tell. See Tracy was just dropped off by a neighbor. They did get her birthday and the tragedy that probably caused her condition. I don't think I should share that story because it is not my story to share. All I can tell you it is a tragedy. And I mean a tragedy. It took her over the edge into this world of Alzheimer's. A world she will never come back from. Even more tragic is that she has NO ONE!! That's right. Not one person to visit. No one to buy her clothes, or sheets, or hygiene products, or celebrate her birthday or Christmas or anything. She is literally all alone. The staff are her only friends. Estrellita and I have decided to adopt her. I pray you will join us in supporting Tracy with your prayers, your time and, if you can, your generosity. Our exalted ruler, Curt Mahoney, from Discount Lock & Key has donated \$100 for clothing and bedding. Thank you so much! If you are so inclined to help financially, please send in your check to Palmetto Elks Lodge #2449, P. O. Box 272, Palmetto, FL 34220. Please reference on memo of check "Tracy". If you would like to visit Tracy, or any of the residents at Manatee River Assisted Living Facility, come every Monday at 10:00 am or just drop by at 820 5th Street West, Palmetto, FL 34221.

Tracy is not the only person at Manatee River Assisted Living Facility with no family. There are others there in the same situation. We did create the Country Store (which is free to the residents) to help with their needs. Thanks to everyone who has so generously donated! There is a need for additional supplies which you can purchase through the Amazon Registry: Instructions to purchase supplies for Manatee River Assisted Living Facility from Amazon Registry are as follows:

- 1) On the Amazon app go to Registry and Gifts (found under the three dashes)
- 2) Click "find a registry".
- 3) Type in Palmetto Elks Lodge #2449.
- 4) Click Advance Search.
- 5) The registry will come up and you can select the items you want to purchase.
- 6) Place item(s) in your cart and proceed to check out.
- 7) All items will automatically ship to Estrellita's address.

Please continue to donate children and teen sized hoodies and coats. Coat drive/pass out is October 20th. Veteran's Support Group had two new attendees this past week that read about the meeting in the North River News! The column in the paper is wonderful. Check it out if you haven't done so.

Great big “Thank you” to Chris Mulnex” for supplying all the concrete and labor at the lodge. Everything you did looks amazing.