James Klocke, Manasota Elks Lodge #2734

James Klocke of Manasota Elks Lodge #2734 continually and actively works for the betterment and recognition of the lives of the veterans in his area. As a member of the Manatee County Veterans Council, he works with them on various activities. Not only does he support and take part in the lodge and district visitations to the local veterans hospital, he also organizes and manages multiple projects for veterans. He organized a committee for cleaning and maintenance on the Memorial Veterans Plaza at Manatee Hospital by coordinating a team to clean and paint the benches and sidewalks; they will continue to maintain that area. He managed an adopt-a-vet program when the lodge learned of a local veteran struggling trying to stay in her home. He also has a plan to hold spaghetti dinners in the lodge for veterans in a local senior citizens home. Klocke does his own fundraising as well. He manages a monthly flea market in the parking lot of the lodge to raise money to support projects for the veterans. He holds a monthly raffle in the lodge and held a fundraiser to start the lodge veterans fund. He even convinced a local restaurant to donate a portion of each Elks member’s check to the lodge veterans fund. He is continually looking for new ways to support veterans and is a moving force in the lodge to help members do their best for them.

Lisa Ann Leighty, Orlando Elks Lodge #1079

Lisa Ann Leighty of Orlando Elks Lodge #1079 has been a longtime volunteer at both the Lake Baldwin and Lake Nona Veterans Administration hospitals. She has taken the courses required by the VA to make her a more valued volunteer and able to provide better care and assistance to the veterans. In her position, she organizes activities for the residents and coordinates with lodge members to help conduct some of the programs. These events include monthly bingo parties, luncheons and Veterans Day barbecues. She also takes the veterans on shopping trips, to restaurants for lunch and on fishing trips to local lakes. She also helped at the Wounded Warrior golf tournament and with the annual Christmas luncheon for the visually impaired veterans in the central region at the lodge. She volunteers over 20 hours a week and was recently recognized with a plaque from the VA for contributing over 1,000 hours of service to the residents of the Lake Nona facility.