

HEARTWARMING

'They really are heroes' | NC senior care community goes viral on TikTok

A video from a senior care community in North Carolina is going viral for all of the right reasons.

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ALBEMARLE, N.C. — Residents and staff at Trinity Place in Albemarle, North Carolina, are really soaking up their newfound fame on TikTok.

A video, which has racked up more than 408,000 views, 1,100 comments and 700 shares, is quickly warming the hearts of those on the [popular social media app TikTok](#).

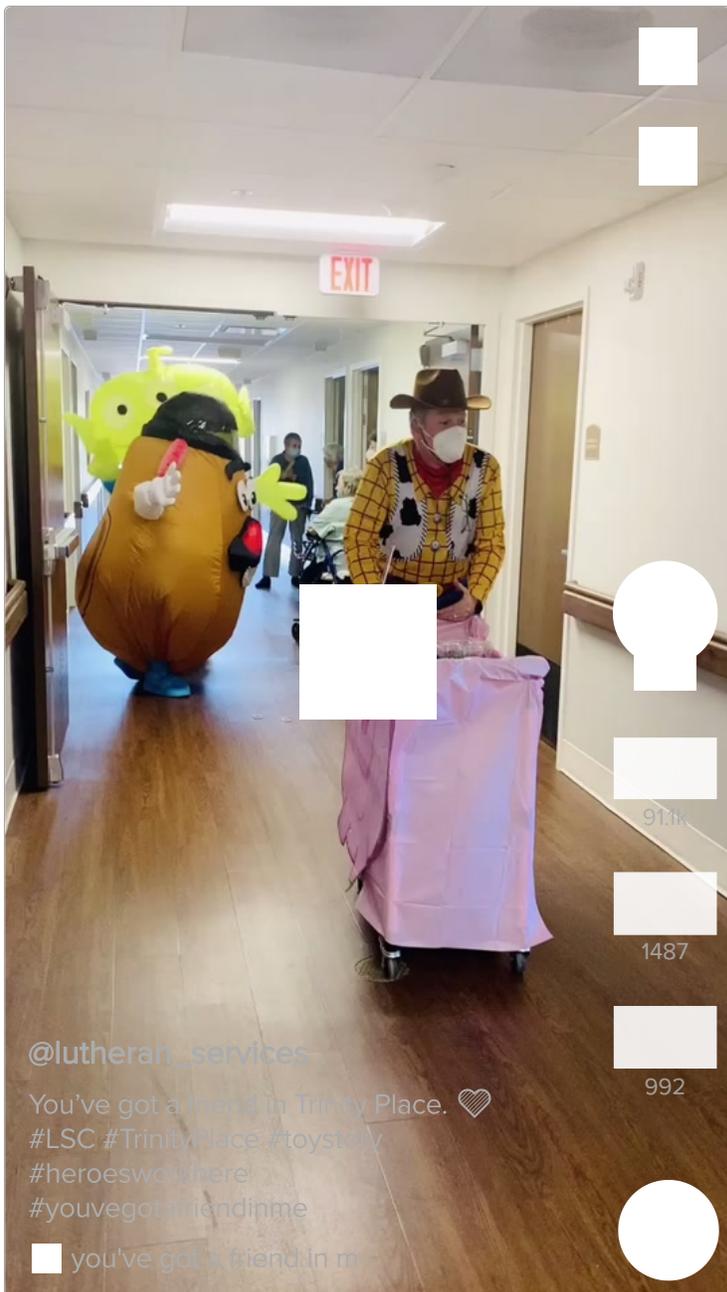
Erin Kidd, the marketing specialist at Lutheran Services Carolinas, said staff at Trinity Place dress up every week for their residents.

"They dress up and do a different act each week," Kidd said, explaining how the viral TikTok video was first made.

The staff in the videos and photos are comprised of three people: Cora Ingle, Tracy Dean and Jerry Hunter. They call themselves the "Hall Hoppin' Heroes."

"The COVID-19 pandemic has really made us look way outside of the box now," Cora Ingle, the life enrichment director, said.

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Back in 2020, the trio was the runner-up in an international cart decorating contest.

"The International Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners reached out to activity professionals and recreation therapists with a cart contest after seeing social media posts around the world sharing ways they've kept spirits up while crafting fun, socially-distanced activities," Kidd said.

No surprise here but, the Hall Hoppin' Heroes stepped up to the plate to create a prize-winning fishing cart.

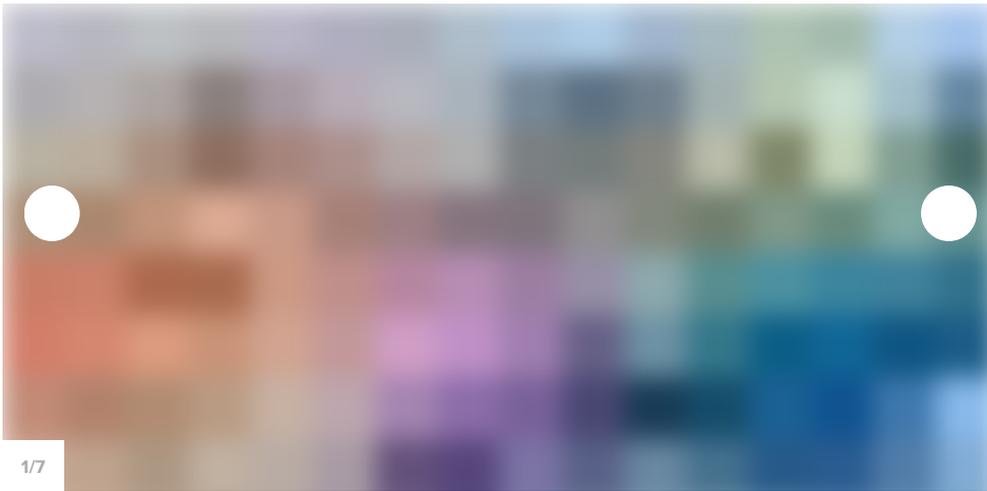


Credit: Trinity Place, Albemarle (Part of Lutheran Services Carolinas nonprofit)

"As a life enrichment group, we usually take a group of residents out to a pond and we enjoy a day of fishing," Ingle said. "Since we were under restrictions and residents, we thought we could bring the pond to them. Fishing is a pastime that triggers memories and allows them to feel as though they are a part of the big world outside."

Kidd told WCNC Charlotte that she started a TikTok account for Lutheran Services Carolinas (LSC) a few months ago because she thought it might be a fun way to showcase what their healthcare heroes have been doing to keep residents' spirits up. She also thought this would be a great way to connect with some of the younger generation.

NC senior care community goes viral on TikTok



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Credit: Trinity Place, Albemarle (Part of Lutheran Services Carolinas nonprofit)

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"Along with our long-term care facilities, LSC also has foster care programs, refugee programs, TBI homes, and even a new program to help victims of human trafficking, so any way to reach more people is a plus for us," Kidd explained.

Kidd said she also hoped this video would serve as a little escape from the worries of COVID-19.

"With COVID-19 constantly on our minds, we could all use a little escape," Kidd said. "I want our TikTok to be a place where people can come and watch videos that put a smile on their face, or in a case like this, bring them tears of joy."

On Friday, Lutheran Services had just 20 followers, but now they're up to over 12,000 and counting.

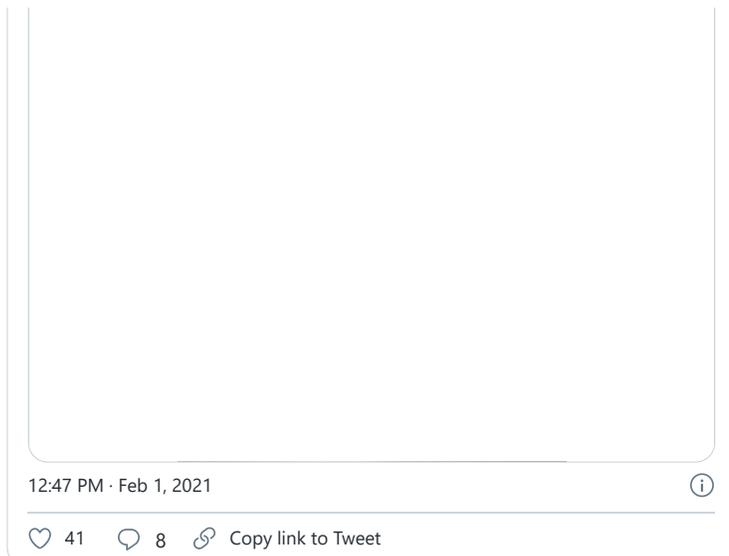
"When the Hall Hoppin' Heroes broke out those Toy Story costumes, I knew it would be perfect for a TikTok," Kidd exclaimed. "So I put some of my favorite clips that Cora sent me together and found the perfect song. Toy Story was one of my favorite movies growing up, so I was really excited."

Kidd said the Hall Hoppin' Heroes dress up every Friday for their residents and according to Ingle, the residents are very eager to see what's in store for them that week.

 **Meilin Tompkins** 
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CUTE ALERT: A senior care community in NC is going viral on TikTok for all of the right reasons!

Watch as the "Hall Hoppin' Heroes," dressed as characters from Toy Story, bring joy to residents at Trinity Place!
(Credit: Trinity Place, Albemarle) [@wcnc](#)



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"We actually have residents and staff now looking for us every week. And if we don't show up they remind us, 'you better show up,'" Ingle joked.

But why did this video blow up so quickly? Kidd has some theories.

"I think the combination of the beloved movie characters and the song choice played a big part in why this video got so much attention. But I also think it's because of how the video makes you feel," she said.

Kidd said while the videos are fun, it also highlights the amazing work front-line workers do every day.

"Those smiles from the residents are genuine. COVID-19 has been hard on nursing homes. Families weren't allowed to visit, so our teammates really stepped up and became families for them," Kidd said. "They show up to work every day, during a pandemic, to care for our residents. They really are heroes. This video shows that."

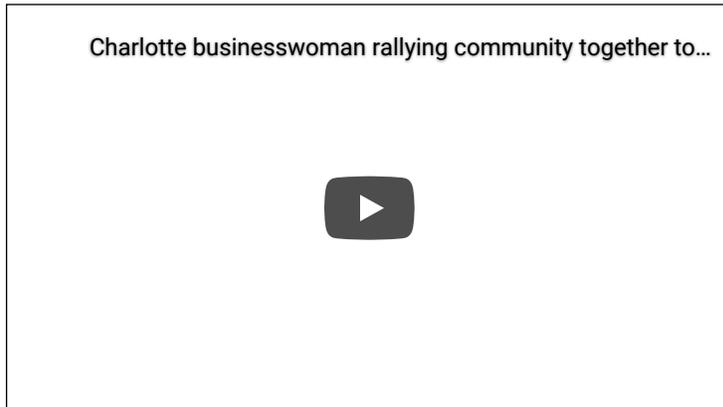
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