

Please provide YOUR Newsletter Inputs—  
Travel, Comment, Pictures, Topics  
to Dan Barnett at  
[dnlcssb@aol.com](mailto:dnlcssb@aol.com)

### Upcoming walks this quarter:

January 1, 4 & 18, February 1 & 15, March 1, 15 & 29

See Page 3

## MID-FLORIDA MILERS NEWSLETTER

### Comments from the President

by Cathy Metherell, President

Four Walks, ready for new walking adventures in a new year.

First, I would like to say that I hope you have had a nice holiday and ready for a new year. For those who attended Walk Around Florida 33 in Palm Coast, I hope you enjoyed the weekend.

At the end of October, I went to Tallahassee to do two walks. First walk I did was Quincy FL. located 20 miles west of Tallahassee. Quincy was founded in 1828 and named for John Quincy Adams. This walk takes you through shady residential streets and the town center. As I walked through residential areas I noticed all types of houses from pre-civil war plantation style two story homes with massive columns to a mid-20th century home with a low pitched roof and another home under construction. The walk goes around the courthouse square of which Quincy is the county seat for Gadsden County. Farming is what has fueled the economy of this area of Florida including a shade grown tobacco developed with seeds from Cuba and Virginia. There were some nice Halloween decorations the day I did this walk.

The next day I did the Tallahassee Capital walk. At the time I did the walk there was construction around the capital, so I had to modify the route. The walk goes though the nice shady Cascades park near the capital with a waterfall where I had lunch at a restaurant located in the park. The walk goes through downtown past the Museum of Florida History before heading into Florida State University campus. I noticed most of the campus buildings are made of red brick. I passed several interesting statues including Integration depicting

first African American at the University. I passed the Legacy Fountain, which represents FSU's evolution from a women's liberal arts college to the co-ed university it is today. This was a very shady part of the walk. Tallahassee is known for its tree canopy which has taken a beating over the last several years due to tropical storms and a significant tornado back in May of 2024.

Both of these nice walks are sponsored by First Coast Trail Forgers Walking Club of Jacksonville FL.

I went to visit my family near Mobile AL. for Thanksgiving. While there I did walks in Monroeville AL. and Bagdad FL. Monroeville AL. is the county seat of Monroe County and home of Harper Lee who wrote To Kill a Mockingbird. Inside the old courthouse is a replica of the Hollywood courtroom seen in the movie To Kill a Mockingbird. The walk went through the cemetery where she is buried. There are pens and pencils left at her grave site in appreciation of her literary works. Truman Capote also spent time in Monroeville. This walk takes you through the town center down a busy street and in residential areas before arriving back into the center of town. It was small business Saturday, so I spent some money at two shops in this small town. This walk is sponsored by Capital City Wanderers out of Montgomery AL.

On my way back to Orlando I stopped to do the walk in Bagdad FL. Bagdad is an old lumber town located on the Blackwater River. There are no stores or restaurants and most houses were built between early 1800s to late 1950s. About three fourths of this walk is shady. I encountered a friendly dog and cat along the walk. This walk is

sponsored by Pensacola Volksmarch Club.

Some events to look forward to this year is our club annual meeting in May and Walk Around Florida 34 in the fall in which our club is the host. We have started some planning for the weekend and more information to follow in the newsletters and E NEWS. I would like to thank all of you for helping to keep this club going as a volunteer or participating in club walks.

See you out on the trail.

**Membership Report** by Dave Piatt, Membership Chairperson

As of 12/16/24 we have 49 memberships and 73 members. This compares to 48 memberships and 74 members on 12/16/23. Membership appears stable.

Since our last newsletter, we have added **Linda Butler** to our club. If you see her on the trail, be sure to welcome her to the Mid-Florida Milers.

**Routes and Trails Topics** by Dan Barnett, Routes and Trails

We have several events scheduled for the quarter of January 1 through March 31. I would like to highlight a few of them. We continue our traditional New Year’s Walk at Universal Studio and culminate with having lunch at Miller’s Ale House. On February 15 we will have a Traditional Event at Big Tree Park in Longwood. Then, on March 15, we will have a Traditional Event at Lake Baldwin. Besides these great walks, we will be walking at some of our popular Year Round Events.

I hope to see you at all of our great walks this quarter.

<b>MFM Club Officers/Committees</b>	
President	Cathy Metherell
Vice President	Paul Erickson
Secretary	Sharon Axelrod
Treasurer	Dan Barnett
Newsletter	Dan Barnett
Membership	Dave Piatt
Publicity	Veronica Palacios
Routes and Trails	Dan Barnett
Operations Support	John Hunter/Tom Carter
YRE Coordinator	Jenny Thomas
Volunteer Coordinator	Sharon Axelrod
Website	Dave Piatt

# Walk Information

Q1 Mid-Florida Milers Walks		
1 Jan	Universal, Miller's Ale House	8:30-9:15 am
4 Jan	Orlando South, Beardall Senior Center	8:30-9:15 am
18 Jan	The Villages, Lake Sumter, Waterfront Inn	9:00-9:30 am
1 Feb	International Drive, Comfort Inn & Suites	8:30-9:15 am
15 Feb	Big Tree Park, Longwood	8:30-9:15 am
1 Mar	Orlando Downtown, Beardall Senior Center	8:30-9:15 am
15 Mar	Lake Baldwin	8:30-9:15 am
29 Mar	Winter Park, AmTrak Station	8:30-9:15 am

DATE	Q4 Other Florida Upcoming Traditional Events	REGISTER
1 Jan	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville Beach, Jacksonville Beach Pier, 503 1 <sup>st</sup> St N, Jacksonville Beach, 5/10K walk.	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
20 Jan	First Coast Trail Forgers, Fernandino Beach, Burney Park, 95570 Burney Blvd, American Beach, 7/10K walk.	Register 8:30am, walk at 9:00am
8 Feb	Happy Wanderers, <b>(Bike)</b> Deland, Lake Beresford Park, 2100 Fatio Rd, Deland, 14/25K bike.	Register 8:30-9:00am
8 Feb	Happy Wanderers, Deland, Lake Beresford Park, 2100 Fatio Rd, Deland, 5/10K walk.	Registration 9:00-10:30am
1 Mar	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, Stockton Park, 4021 Ortega Blvd, Jacksonville, 5/10K walk	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
8 Mar	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd, Ponte Vedra Beach, 5/10K walk	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
22 Mar	First Coast Trail Forgers, Palm Coast, Washington Oaks Garden State Park, 6400 N Oceanshore Blvd, Palm Coast, 5/10K walk	Register 8:30am, walk at 9:30am
	For information on other group walks in Central Florida, please visit (click on) the below club's websites or Facebook pages	
	Happy Wanderers	<a href="#">Happy Wanderers Walking Club Webpage</a> <a href="#">Happy Wanderers Facebook Page</a>
	First Coast Trail Forgers	<a href="#">First Coast Trail Forgers Walking Club Webpage</a>
	Suncoast Sandpipers	<a href="#">Suncoast Sandpipers Webpage</a> <a href="#">Suncoast Sandpipers Facebook Page</a>

MFM Member Milestone Achievements			
Name	City	Events	Distance
Cathy Metherell	Orlando	750	6000k
Courtesy The American Wanderer, December 2024			

YRE Walk Monitors	
Celebration	Howard Daughtrey
Maitland	Tom Carter
Orlando Downtown	JoAnne Cross
Orlando North	John Hunter
Orlando South	JoAnne Cross
Orlando I-Drive	Paul Erickson
Orlando Disney Springs	Paul Erickson
Orlando Universal	Paul Erickson
South Florida - 5 Online	
The Villages - Lake Sumter Lndg	Jan Van Vlack
The Villages - Spanish Springs	Jan Van Vlack
Winter Park	Michael Kirchner

**National AVA Office Moved** by Hector Hernandez, AVA Information Technology Specialist

The National Office has moved to a new building in the same vicinity (of the previous office). The move will save the AVA approximately \$10,000 per year on rent and allow us to stay in an area where we are supported by the local community and the King William Association.

The new address is:  
 1032 South Alamo Street San Antonio, Texas 78210

**Another Successful Individual Donor Campaign in 2024, Thanks To You! BIG GIVE TOTAL = \$96,109.00** by AVA Leadership

Congratulations to all who supported our annual individual donor campaign, The Big Give. The final donor report for the Big Give will be completed in December and results for all prize winners will be announced during our December 18 online seminar at 7pm Central. You do not want to miss this one! We will have a representative from Fleet Feet share tips on how to buy the perfect walking shoe! To sign up for the online seminar go to [ava.org](http://ava.org) and register.

Thank you to all our donors, we appreciate you!

**Why You Should Come to Convention!** by Jerry Wilson, Chair, Convention Committee

All walkers that enjoy walks, seeing new sights and having different experiences should come to the convention. The AVA Convention is held every other year and is designed to spotlight the best of the area of the country we are visiting. Don't think only local club delegates should attend this national event. Our Trailmaster, Helen Hull for 2025, has designed some great one-of-a-kind walks. Come to Las Cruces in 2025 and experience these walks. A one-of-a-kind Traditional Walk will take AVA walkers across the border to Juarez Mexico. This group walk starts in El Paso, Texas where a bus will drop walkers off and pick them up to return to Las Cruces. An alternative to crossing into Mexico will be a walk centered around the El Paso Rose Garden. Walks on other days will show you the "Real New Mexico", buses will take walkers to locations within about an hour from Las Cruces.

National Office staff and your AVA Convention Committee have planned some fun social events. Much like regional conventions/roundups, only on a grander scale, walkers get together with other walkers from their past and make new walker-friends from all over the country.

Yes, there are two afternoon sessions for delegates, but there are other things to do during those few hours, such as local walks, a swim and cycle (bike) event, museums, shopping and exploring the local food fare. Attendees have the choice to sit-in and observe the two General Sessions, roughly 150 minute sessions for delegates, and also the opportunity to sit in on an AVA Board Meeting to see some of the inner workings of AVA. This is a perfect opportunity to meet existing AVA Board Members and Officers, and incoming Members and Officers. Let's all converge on Las Cruces New Mexico in Spring 2025.

### **2025 Las Cruces Walk Plans** by Helen Hull

We have finalized our walks for the 2025 convention in Las Cruces. Those of you who read the monthly Checkpoint have already heard about the walk schedule and information about the pre and post walks. The November Checkpoint included more information about the walks near Las Cruces. As mentioned in the October Checkpoint, all walks will be available for the entire Apr 26 thru May 4 week except for the International Friendship walk from El Paso to Juarez. We will be featuring a walk each day with a manned start/finish table, directions, and stamps.

So, repeating the information from the October Checkpoint:

Sat, Apr 26 – City of Rocks State Park – Faywood, NM

Sun, Apr 27 – Silver City, NM

Mon, Apr 28 – free day for area walks including the University Campus walk in Las Cruces

Tues, Apr 29 – Organ Mountains Dripping Springs – Las Cruces, NM

Wed, Apr 30 – El Paso International Walk to Juarez or El Paso Municipal Rose Garden.

Thurs, May 1 – Choice of White Sands National Park or Alamogordo Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park – Mesilla (Las Cruces)

Fri, May 2 – Reverse of Thurs (Mesilla Valley SP or White Sands)

Sat, May 3 – Historic Downtown Las Cruces

Sun, May 4 – Socorro, N

Now let's look at the Las Cruces area walks:

Tuesday's featured walk at Dripping Springs in the Organ Mountains is just 12 miles from the convention center in Las Cruces, a quick 20 minute drive. Dripping Springs was the site of a 'resort' and still has some ruins of the old hotel. This site is managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park system. Don't forget your National Park Passport and pass. There is a vehicle fee (free for National Park Pass holders). The 5k route is an easy, fairly level walk to the ruins and back to the visitor center. The 10k route continues around a rock outcropping close to the visitor center and visits 'hermit cave' which was inhabited by a hermit for many years. The walk (not really a hike) does not require hiking boots, just sturdy walking shoes, hiking poles can be useful.

Wednesday, we will be heading to El Paso which is about an hour away. Bus transportation will be provided for those who have pre-registered. Walkup registration will be available at the convention center and on-site, but will not guarantee you a seat on the bus. You might have to provide your own

transportation. The buses will go to either the Juarez border crossing walk (bring your passport) or the El Paso Municipal Rose Garden. The Juarez walk will be sanctioned as a 5k only due to travel constraints while the Rose Garden will offer both 5 and 10k routes.

The Juarez buses will drop walkers at the Del Norte Bridge where they will deposited their \$.50 (exact change only) into the turnstile and then cross the bridge over the Rio Grande. The walk continues about 1 mile to the city plaza area and passes the first church affiliated with the Baptist in Juarez, the Tim Tam Museum, the Kentucky Bar (check out its prohibition era connection), shops, and eateries. The walk continues to the historic Customs House, Our Lady of Guadalupe Cathedral and the old city hall. The city hall, now an art museum, is the checkpoint where walkers will be greeted by Juarez officials and offered refreshments. The walk then returns back to El Paso via the Del Norte Bridge. An official will check your passport (just to verify that you have it) before you deposit your \$.40 (exact change) into the turnstile. At mid-bridge, officials will check your passport and ask a few questions. This took a couple of minutes when I did the walk in mid-Sept on a weekday, but it could take longer depending on the number of people crossing and possibly other situations.

For those who do not have passports or who do not wish to walk into Juarez, we have a separate walk at the El Paso Municipal Rose Garden. The garden was in full bloom when I visited there last April. After strolling thru the gardens, the walk continues thru the Manhattan Heights Historic District. The area was the site of a copper smelter in the late 1800's which was demolished by 1912 to make room for a residential area with wealthy buyers in mind. The walk has 2 separate 5k loops originating from the Rose Garden.

Now for the Thursday and Friday walks. Because of the size of the White Sands National Monument and their restrooms and parking areas, the rangers have requested that we divide our walkers over the 2 days. Walkers who pre-register will be able to select either Thurs or Fri for their visit to the Sands. However, due to bus capacity, you might not be able to get your desired date. Preference will be given to first-registered, first-on-the-bus. Again, due to distance and park facilities, the White Sands walk will be sanctioned for 5k only. After a quick stop at the visitor center (potty break), the bus will stop for 2 short hikes of .5k and 1.6k before heading to the end of the road and the Alkali Flat. Although this has a 5 mile hike, it takes 4+ hours to do the whole loop. The 'bus host(ess)' will give you time to explore the dunes with a 'return time'. The trail is marked by posts due to the shifting sand and offers the '2-steps forward, 1-step back' loose sand hiking experience. The bus will make one more stop at the visitor center before heading back to Las Cruces. Please bring snacks and water with you as food is not available at the park and buses may not get back to Las Cruces until 1:00 or 2:00.

So on the Thurs/Fri when you don't go to White Sands, you can explore the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, just 5 miles from the convention center. We will have a shuttle bus circling about every 20-30 minutes to take walkers to the park and bring them back to the convention center. The park offers 2.5 miles of trails along well-groomed wide trails, a bit sandy, but very flat. The 10k walk will continue out of the park and connect to a hike-n-bike paved trail along the Rio Grande which runs from the park to Las Cruces. No, you don't walk back to the convention center, the bus will pick you up and deliver you back to the convention center.

Saturday, our featured walk is in historic downtown Las Cruces, about 3 miles from the convention center. The walk goes thru the downtown plaza, site of the Saturday Market featuring arts and crafts, farmers' market, and food booths. We will have a table set up in the plaza and hope to talk the locals into joining us for the walk. We are looking for people willing to meet and walk with them.

Did I mention that Las Cruces offers FREE bus service all around town including a route from the convention center to the downtown area. So join us for a mini-tour of New Mexico, its deserts,

mountains, National Parks, history, and its unique culture. Be sure and check the Checkpoints and future TAWs for specific requirements for the walks.

**2025 AVA Biennial Convention – Meet You In New Mexico** by Jerry Wilson, Chair,  
Convention Committee

It's more than time to get together again with fellow walkers! Let's all meet in Las Cruces New Mexico in 2025!

National Office staff, as well as the Convention Committee, are working to plan a convention not to be missed.

There may be changes to the following:

**Dates of Interest (Highlights):**

**- Already Open - Lodging Reservations**

Accessible through the AVA Website

**- Already Identified - RV Park - Recommended**

Identified on the AVA Website

**- FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)**

Loaded to the AVA Website. Watch for updates!

**- Convention Registration System**

Accessible through the AVA Website

**- Convention Volunteering**

Check Box on Registration System to Volunteer

- Those checking the box will be contacted for details.

**- Silent Auction Donations**

Registrants can choose to go to a separate system to register donation items

**- Saturday, April 26, 2025**

Pre-Convention Walk - City of Rocks State Park 90 miles from Las Cruces

Las Cruces iMIRA! - Spring Festival

**- Sunday, April 27, 2025**

Pre-Convention Walk - Silver City

120 miles from Las Cruces

**- Monday, April 28, 2025**

Soft-Opening of Registration and Merchandise Counter

University Walk, Swim and Bike Events Open in Las Cruces

**- Convention Dates: Tuesday, April 29 – Friday, May 2**

**- Tuesday, April 29**

Convention Walk - Organ Mountain Dripping Springs (Busing)

AVA Board Meeting

Evening Meet and Greet (Paid Event) (Busing)

**- Wednesday, April 30, 2025**

Convention Walk - El Paso International Walk-Only Day (Busing)

or Convention Walk - Rose Garden/ Manhattan Heights District Walk (Busing)

AVA Regular Membership Meeting

**- Thursday, May 1, 2025**

Convention Walk - White Sands National Park (Busing)

or Mesilla Valley State Park (Busing)

Seminars & Booths Gala and HOF Inductions

**- Friday, May 2, 2025**

Convention Walk - White Sands National Park (Busing)

or Mesilla Valley State Park (Busing)

Booths AVA Regular Membership Meeting

**- Saturday, May 3, 2025**

Post-Convention Walk - Las Cruces Downtown

**- Sunday, May 4, 2025**

Post-Convention Walk - Socorro - 150 miles from Las Cruces

Note: Beginning Monday, May 5 local clubs in New Mexico are hosting county walks in Northwest New Mexico. Local club walks are available all over New Mexico and Northern Texas for you to access. Pre-convention, Post-convention, Convention, Bike and Swim Events will be available as seasonal events for dates beyond the Main date for each. The exception will be the International Walk which is available only on Wednesday, April 30.

Watch the monthly AVA Checkpoint articles and the AVA webpage for convention updates.

**Walk More in '25** by Carl Cordes, AVA Vice-Chair

Most of us understand the many benefits of walking from our own experience and the many studies on the subject.

“Physical activity (especially walking) can help with a wide range of issues, from relieving stress and improving your mood to reducing depressive and anxious symptoms and adding quality to your life. Add a social aspect by walking with your spouse, friend, or group for an even stronger source of mood enhancement.”

“Research shows that two and a half to five hours of moderate-intensity exercise per week — which includes walking — can help reduce your risk of certain cancers like colon, breast, endometrial, kidney, liver, multiple myeloma and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.”

“Regular walkers have fewer heart attacks and strokes, lower blood pressure and higher levels of HDL (“good” cholesterol) than non-exercisers. Walking can also improve blood sugars and either improve the management of diabetes or help prevent it altogether.”

“People who walk for exercise are more likely to stick with their walking regimen if they walk in groups. Group walking plays an important part in both improved physical activity and better quality of life”

Group walking? Who does that? We do! So, I challenge each of you to Walk More in '24 and beyond. But more than that, recruit more walkers, too.

1. Invite friends and family to the next walk.



2. Promote your walks to the community by any means necessary.
3. Put out flyers at places where active people gather.
4. Visit a senior recreation center and ask to do a talk about walking.
5. Partner with your local Parks and Recreation Department for a community walk.

Don't be discouraged if some of these don't work first time. Keep promoting our mission of Fun, Fitness and Friendship until you succeed. And when you succeed, AVA - America's Walking Club succeeds!

# Pictures Q4 2024

These are from the Q4 events that I took or were provided to me. I urge those that carry cameras (i.e., smartphones) to take and submit pictures of our events and email them to me at [dnlcssb@aol.com](mailto:dnlcssb@aol.com). Thank You!

## 5 October at Lake Nona



Sharon



Cathy



Howard



Susan, Kevin



Lorenz, Charmain,  
Indira, Alton



Bull Art



Giraffe Art



Pirate Art



Purple Deer Art



Silver Couple Art



Silver Man Art



Sharon, John



Checkpoint



Checkpoint



Luncheon: Cathy, John, Joyce, Michael



Luncheon: Sharon, Jane, Steve, Jennv, Jorge



Dan, Sharon



Bernadette

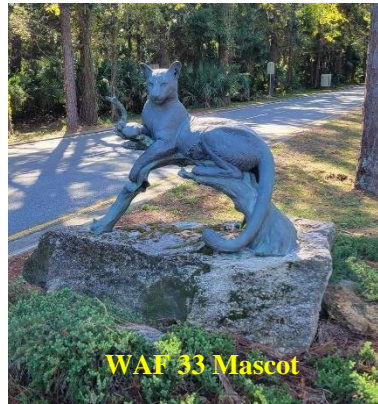
19 October at **Celebration #1**

(Sorry no pictures were provided. For future walks, request walkers take pictures and email them to me at [dnlcssb@aol.com](mailto:dnlcssb@aol.com) or text to 808.342.8584)

1-3 November at WAF 33



WAF 33 Banner



WAF 33 Mascot



Dan and Jenny



Tom



Dan, Sharon, Jenny, Paul



Fred, Leslie



Fred, Mike, Nancy



Bird on Trail



**Bike Trail**



**Bike Trail**



**Nancy**



**Saturday Morning Trail**



**Bill and Other Walkers**



**Cathy**



**Triathlon Finishers (Jeanne, Dan, Bill)**



**Cathy, Fred at Check Point**



**Kevin, Susan**



Leslie, Fred at Registration



Howard at Check Point



Check Point



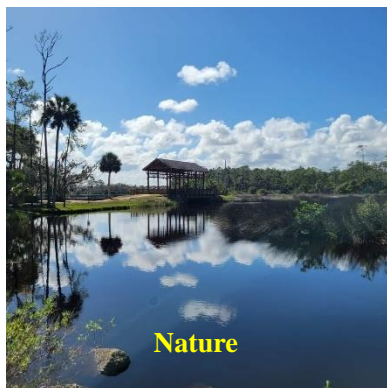
Finish



Nature at Saturday Afternoon Walk

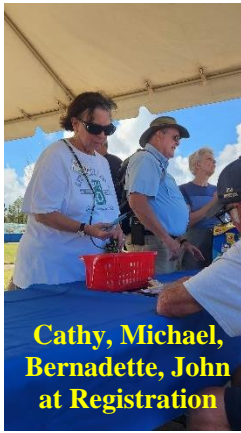


Registration



Nature





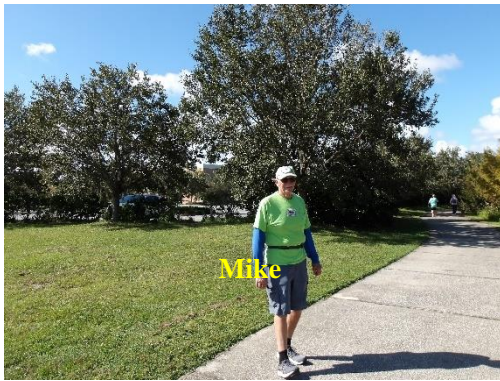
**Cathy, Michael,  
Bernadette, John  
at Registration**



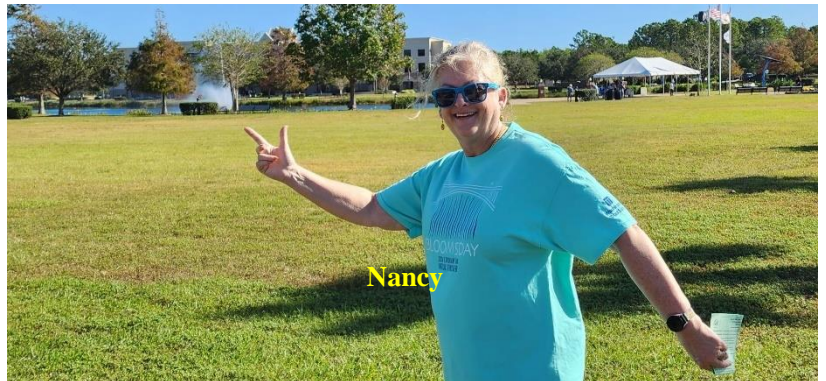
**Jeanne, Fred**



**Dan**



**Mike**



**Nancy**

For additional WAF 33 photos, please go to this Happy Wanderers link:  
[HW-WAF33-2024\\_Flagler-Palm-Coast.pdf](http://HW-WAF33-2024_Flagler-Palm-Coast.pdf)

16 November at **Spanish Springs**



**Cathy, Fred, Leslie, Sharon**



**Charlotte, Paul, Cathy**



Registration



Fred, Leslie



Sharon, Cathy, Paul



Sharon, Dan, John



Cathy, Sharon



Dan, John



Christmas Tree

29 November at **Winter Park**

(Sorry no pictures were provided. For future walks, request walkers take pictures and email them to me at [dnlcssb@aol.com](mailto:dnlcssb@aol.com) or text to 808.342.8584)



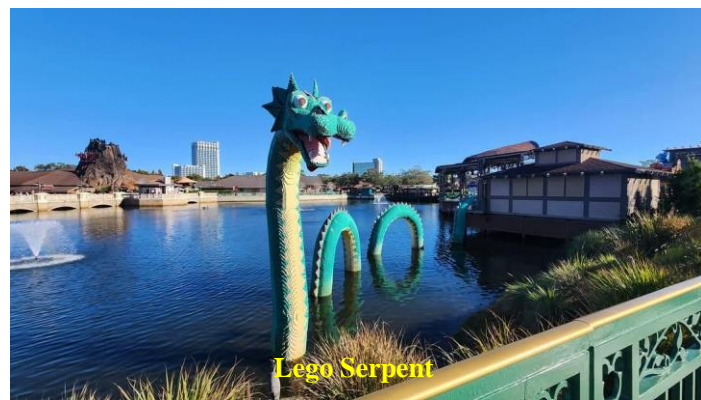
7 December at Disney Springs



Registration



Jehny, Sharon, Fred, Leslie, Sharon



Lego Serpent



Jehn, Paul, Tom, Sharon, Sharon, Jenny, Cathy



Christmas Entertainment



Paul, Sharon, Tom, Sharon, John



Jenny, Sharon



Sharon, Dan, John



Sharon, Howard, Paul, Cathy, Sharon, Jenny, Dan, John

21 December at Kissimmee



Registration



Registration



Registration



Bataan Memorial



Cathy, Sharon



Howard



JoAnne, Rita



John, Viv



Kathy



Michael,  
Bernadette



Michelle



Court House



Light House



Sharon, Paul,  
Michelle



Tom, John



Veronica

