

Please provide YOUR Newsletter Inputs—
 Travel, Comment, Pictures, Topics
 to Dan Barnett at
dnlcssb@aol.com

Upcoming walks this quarter:
 July 5 & 19, August 2, 16 & 30, September 6 & 20
 See Page 5

MID-FLORIDA MILERS NEWSLETTER

Comments from the President

by Cathy Metherell, President

Books, WAF 34, An Epic Road Journey Part 1

On this first day of summer, I hope you are staying cool as you can.

I want to encourage you that if you have completed record books, please send them in to AVA office 1032 S. Alamo St. San Antonio TX 78210. This is one way we keep track of club participation.

We are in the final planning for Walk Around Florida 34 to be held November 7-9. Registration forms should be out soon. Hotel reservation is now open at Fairfield Inn and Suites near Celebration [Walk Around Florida 34](#). Use promo code Walk Around Florida when you make your reservation.

I recently retired and went on an epic road trip across the country from Orlando to Los Angeles. Knowing the 2025 AVA convention was going to be in Las Cruces NM I planned my trip to break up the long ride out to the Pacific Ocean. I aimed to do an AVA walk or two in every state I traveled through.

I left Orlando on April 18th headed to Panama City via mostly a coastal route. After driving through miles of pine trees on mostly two-line roads, I made my way to my first stop in St. George Island to visit the lighthouse where Allen and I had a lovely time on our third wedding anniversary. After leaving the island I drove along highway 98 through the area where Hurricane Michael went through in 2018 and into the Central Time Zone. There were places still waiting for



repairs from the hurricane seven years later. I arrived in Panama City in the evening and I had a nice dinner. The next day, I headed out to do the Panama City walk. About half of the walk goes along the bay and along a bayou back into town where I walked through a farmers' market and bought an apple. I stopped to eat lunch before I made my way back two blocks to the start. After driving through more miles of pine trees on four lane roads I made my way to I-10 and headed to Alabama.



With it being Easter weekend, I spent the next three days with my sister and her family near Mobile. After lunch, my sister and I took a walk through the hilly neighborhood that prepared me for upcoming walks on my trip. The Monday after Easter, I drove across Mobile Bay to do the Mobile walk. Mobile is home to the first Mardi Gras parade in the United States in 1703.

Growing up in Mobile area, my parents took my sister, brother and myself to the parades. Most of this walk is shady and takes you through and also by several parks in Mardi Gras, Spanish Plaza and Bienville Square to name a few. I walked past the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception



where the entrance was draped in mourning cloth due to the death of Pope Francis that morning. I walked inside and there was a nice photo of Pope Francis on the alter. Before heading back to the start, I made one more stop at a sweet shop

that has been in business in downtown Mobile since 1917. Growing up, we always had Easter eggs in our baskets from that candy store. After the walk I drove over to see the SS United States docked along Mobile River.



The ship had been in port in Philadelphia from 1996 and while in Mobile work is being done to sink the ship as part of the world's largest artificial reef off the west Florida coast. Before heading back across the Mobile Bay to my sisters, I drove by the Catholic elementary and high schools I attended.

Tuesday after Easter my cross-country journey continued with my walk in Ocean Springs MS. Most of the walk was shady except along the beach on Biloxi Bay. Some



of the oak trees are very old and massive. Ocean Springs is part of the Mississippi Blues Trail where famous singers

including Johnnie Lee Johnson, who was born in Ocean Springs and was a member of the Allman Brothers Band, Henry Donahue a bandleader, and the Tempy Smith family who performed in the 1920s along the gulf coast. There is a Seaman Memorial near the beach. Near the end of the walk, I stopped in a cafe and had tea and a delicious Praline.

By noon I was back on the road heading to New Orleans LA after stopping for lunch in Slidell LA. As I was driving in New Orleans on I-10, I noticed lots of new houses as I remembered that hurricane Katrina wiped out a lot of the south side of Slidell. As I approached New Orleans I saw buildings still boarded up and vacant lots due to Katrina. Over to the east side of the highway I saw the rollercoaster from Jazzland Six Flags Amusement Park that opened in 2000 and after Katrina in 2005 never reopened.



This was my third time doing the New Orleans walk, so I went off the

route a few times. This walk goes by Audubon Aquarium to the Riverwalk for about a mile. I passed a Monument to the Immigrant seeking freedom and who have made New Orleans the special city it is today. I have been coming to New Orleans since my childhood and no matter what happens, the city always makes a comeback. The Mississippi River was in flood stage due to waters draining down the river from ongoing Ohio River Valley floods at the time. I walked through the French Market where I bought fancy Mardi Gras beads and pralines to take to friends and family, I was going to meet up



with in CA. I could hear jazz music along most of the walk. Before heading back to the car, I stopped at the famous Cafe Du

Monde and had beignets and water to drink. Of all the walks I did, this one was the most humid. I was amused by all the people walking by. Walking through the French Quarter of New Orleans, it feels more European than an American city to me.

The next morning, I continued my journey west, to Texas, a state I had never been to before. Long segments of I-10 are on elevated bridges above swamp land between New Orleans and Lafayette LA. Driving through southwest Louisiana I could see for miles due to how flat it is. I saw lots of what I believe were rice paddies and pecan groves. As I was approaching Texas, I drove through a bad thunderstorm. I stopped for lunch to wait for the storm to move out and after a stop for gas, I drove to Galveston passing oil refineries on both sides of the road. I knew I was in Texas.

After checking into my hotel, with a view of the Gulf, I had an early dinner. The weather was cloudy with a nice breeze, so I did half of the walk in the evening and the other half early the next morning. I passed benches that had information about the Galveston area on them from plants, wildlife and history about the area. There is a monument to the 1900 hurricane where 6000 plus people lost their lives mostly to storm surge. That



was the catalyst for building the seawall that I walked on to protect the city. It was nice to hear gentle waves along this whole walk. As I drove out of Galveston, I saw beautiful old homes and hoped one day that I could return and do the other AVA walk here. Driving towards Houston, I saw large wind turbine blades on rail cars waiting to go to their final destination.

On my way to San Antonio, I had to stop at Buc-ee's seeing that Texas is where it all started. My first stop in San Antonio was the AVA national office to make sure I was able to get the stamp for the walk that starts from the office. The staff were busy packing up to head out to the convention in Las Cruces NM. I headed to my hotel to check in and rest for a while. When I arrived, I heard music coming from a park a block from the hotel. After dinner I walked down to the park where there was a weeklong kick off of fiesta events leading up to Cinco de Mayo. I bought a colorful head band with ribbons hanging from the back to join in the fun and listen to music for a while before going back to hotel.



The next morning, I headed out to do the San Antonio Riverwalk south walk. I looked at the map and started the walk from the park I had been to the night before which was on the route. I passed some interesting buildings and memorials. One of the buildings was the beautiful Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. Next, I went down a ramp to the riverwalk portion of the walk. I was grateful for the shade and lovely flowers I saw along the walk. The tree canopy muted the sound of traffic going by above me. I passed waterfalls along the river. There was an amphitheater that has a stage on one side of the river and seating on the other side. Next the route



went back to street level where I visited the beautiful San Fernando Cathedral. Just off the route was a bridge with so many love locks that I could not see the chain link fence where they were hanging from. The route took me back down to the river walk and back up to street level to the Alamo. It is a place I have always wanted to visit. This was the site of a historic battle in the Mexican American War. I was amazed the building is still standing due to how old it is. I would encourage you to read up on the history of the Alamo. At the end of the walk I stopped for lunch and had an avocado bowl salad that was so big, I had the leftover for dinner. In the evening, I took a riverboat cruise along the river I had walked along earlier that day.



The next day before I continued to head west, I did the walk from the AVA office which is located in the King William neighborhood. First thing I noticed was all the decorations hanging from houses and business in the area for fiesta week. I passed beautiful homes, large oak trees and flowers blooming along most of the route. There is a mural on the side of a building depicting buildings in the area. Part of the route was along the river. I was thankful for the cloud cover as it was a bit humid. Before leaving San Antonio, I stopped at H-E-B, a Texas based food market to pick up a few snacks for the road. I was at the halfway mark of my trip, crossing the country as I was leaving San Antonio.

I hope you enjoyed reading about my journey across the country. Look for part 2 and 3 in upcoming newsletters. See you out on the trail.

Membership Renewal by Dave Piatt, Membership Chairperson

Mid-Florida Milers membership runs from July 1 to June 30. The costs for renewing now are \$15 for a single person membership and \$25 for a couple or family.

Renewing your membership in Mid-Florida Milers is very easy. If none of your contact information has changed, then all you need to do is to pay your membership fee at one our walks and tell them nothing has changed. Or if you are not going to be at a walk soon, then mail a check payable to Mid-Florida Milers and tell us it is a membership renewal, and nothing has changed.

Mid-Florida Milers
P. O. Box 4575
Winter Park, FL 32793

If you need to make some changes to your contact information or you are joining for the first time, then you should send in a completed membership form. The link below will download the membership form.

[MFM Membership Form](#)

With your help, our membership drive will be a big success!

Membership Report by Dave Piatt, Membership Chairperson

As of 6/20/25 we have 18 memberships and 26 members. This compares to 31 memberships and 49 members on 6/20/24. At the end of the 2024/2025 membership year, we had 51 memberships and 75 members. Hopefully a lot of people have just not gotten around to renewing yet.

While this difference is much larger than desired, it is uncertain if this is a real difference or not. For one thing, one day earlier last year, we had a large batch (8 memberships) of renewals arrive. Also, we recently sent out a large number of directed e-mails to people who have not renewed, and I am hopeful that we will see a number of renewals either at the walk at Orlando South or in the mail next week. This was the first directed e-mail reminder and often it gets a higher response. We are planning to send another directed e-mail reminder to people who have still not renewed in early to mid-July.

If you have not yet had time to renew, please renew soon, so that we can get a more accurate count of our members. If you are unsure how to renew, then check out the article on Membership Renewal in this newsletter.

Routes and Trails Topics by Dan Barnett, Routes and Trails

The quarter of July 1 through September 30 has many exciting volksmarching events planned. Our walks include a Traditional Event at Oakland Nature Preserve.

The Mid-Florida Milers are the lead club for the Walk Around Florida (WAF) event this year. This will be the 34th year of such an event. It will be held November 7-9. Our committee is busy putting together the details to make this a success. We will have walks in Kissimmee, St Cloud, Celebration, and Shingle Creek and a swim event in Kissimmee. A detailed sign-up brochure will be coming out soon. So, sign up for this great event when the brochure comes out. Also, we will need volunteers during the three-day weekend. Please consider volunteering. A volunteer sign-up request will be coming out later this summer.

MFM Club Officers/Committees	
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

Reminder: our walk registration times changed in May to 8:00 – 8:45am and will continue to be so for all of our walks until the end of September. In October our walk registration time will change back to 8:45 – 9:30am. Please provide any Mid-Florida Miler Board member with your feedback on the registration time change.

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

Walk Information

Q2 Mid-Florida Milers Walks		
5 Jul	Celebration #1, Starbucks	8:00-8:45 am
19 Jul	Oakland, Oakland Nature Preserve	8:00-8:45 am
2 Aug	Winter Park, AmTrak	8:00-8:45 am
16 Aug	Orlando Downtown, Beardall Senior Center	8:00-8:45 am
30 Aug	Orlando North, Marks Street Senior Center	8:00-8:45 am
6 Sep	Maitland, Walgreens	8:00-8:45 am
20 Sep	Celebration #2, Starbucks	8:00-8:45 am

DATE	Q2 Other Florida Upcoming Traditional Events	REGISTER
26 Jul	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, St Nicholas, Mudville Grille, Atlantic Blvd, Jacksonville, 5/10K walk.	Register 6:30am, walk at 7:00am
23 Aug	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, Lakeshore, 4495 Roosevelt Blvd, Jacksonville, 6/10K walk.	Register 6:30am, walk at 7:00am
20 Sep	Happy Wanderers, (Bike) Lake Mary, Colonial Town Park, 951 Market Promenade Ave, Lake Mary, 25K bike.	Register 9:00am
20 Sep	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, Fuller Warren Shared-Use Path, 1325 San Marco Blvd, Jacksonville, 5/10K walk.	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
	For information on other group walks in Central Florida, please visit (click on) the below club's websites or Facebook pages	
	Happy Wanderers Happy Wanderers Walking Club Webpage Happy Wanderers Facebook Page	
	First Coast Trail Forgers First Coast Trail Forgers Walking Club Webpage	
	Suncoast Sandpipers Suncoast Sandpipers Webpage Suncoast Sandpipers Facebook Page	

MFM Member Milestone Achievements			
Name	City	Events	Distance
John Hunter	Orlando	450	
Courtesy The American Wanderer, June 2025			

YRE Walk	YRE Walk Monitor	YRE Walk Sponsor
Celebration #1	Howard Daughtrey	Jenny Thomas
Celebration #2	Howard Daughtrey	Veronica Palacios
Maitland	Tom Carter	Rosemary/Ron Barna
Orlando Downtown	JoAnne Cross	Paul Erickson
Orlando North	John Hunter	John Hunter
Orlando South	JoAnne Cross	Sharon Axelrod
Orlando I-Drive	Paul Erickson	None
Orlando Disney Springs	Paul Erickson	Letty/Bob Zook
Orlando Universal	Paul Erickson	None
The Villages - Lake Sumter Lndg	Jan Van Vlack	None
The Villages - Spanish Springs	Jan Van Vlack	None
Winter Park	Michael Kirchner	Howard Daughtrey
Delray Beach	Online	Dan/Nancy Barnett
Ft Lauderdale	Online	None
Key West	Online	Sharon Predham
Miami Beach	Online	Cathy Metherell
West Palm Beach	Online	Dan/Nancy Barnett

Club Members Elected to AVA National Positions by Cathy Metherell, MFM President

On behalf of the Mid-Florida Milers Walking Club, I would like to congratulate two of our club members on being elected to AVA National Positions. Leslie Stone has been elected as the AVA Secretary and Jeanne Stokes as the Southeast Regional Director. Please congratulate both members the next time you see them on one of our walks.

Lifetime Membership Awarded by Cathy Metherell, MFM President

At our Annual General Membership Meeting, JoAnne Cross was awarded Lifetime Membership in the Mid-Florida Milers walking club. JoAnne is a founding member of the Mid-Florida Milers and has continuously volunteered her time in helping the club in our efforts to plan walking routes, adding Points of Interest for our walk instructions, selling merchandise and many other activities. In recognition for all of these years of service to our club, the Board of Directors was pleased to unanimously vote to award JoAnne this much deserved recognition.



Thank you, JoAnne, for all that you have done and continue to do for the club.

Sanctioning of MFM Year-Round Events by Jenny Thomas, Chair, YRE’s, Mid-Florida Milers

At our recent Annual Business Meeting, held on 17 May, I presented an item on sanctioning our YRE’s, as follows:

“Each year, to keep our YRE’s active, we pay a sanctioning fee to AVA. Each YRE costs \$40 – so with our 17 YRE’s the cost to MFM is \$680 annually. Also, each year we attempt to schedule 4 or 5 Traditional Events which also need to be sanctioned but at a cost of \$60 each time.

A few years ago, some of our members volunteered to pay a YRE sanctioning fee each year. MFM has been helped financially by these voluntary donations. As a Club, we have also endeavored to limit our expenditures in other ways, for example by closing our storage unit rental. Items that used to be stored commercially are now stored in the home locations of some of our members.

The 6 YRE’s currently supported by our members are:

YRE Walk/Sponsor	
Celebration #1	Jenny Thomas
Orlando Downtown	Paul Erickson
Delray Beach	Dan/Nancy Barnett
Key West	Sharon Predham
Miami Beach	Cathy Metherell
West Palm Beach	Dan/Nancy Barnett

Following the meeting, these additional YRE’s obtained a sponsor:

YRE Walk/Sponsor	
Celebration #2	Veronica Palacios
Disney Springs	Letty/Bob Zook
Maitland	Rosemary/Ron Barna
Orlando North	John Hunter
Orlando South	Sharon Axelrod
Winter Park	Howard Daughtrey

If you have a favorite walk that you would like to sponsor, please contact any of our Board Members to signify your interest.

The following YRE’s remain without a sponsor:

YRE Walk/Sponsor	
International Drive	None
Universal	None
Ft Lauderdale	None
Lake Sumter at The Villages	None
Spanish Springs at The Villages	None

AMERICAN VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP TEAM ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION by Robert Buzolich, AVA Nominating Committee

During the 2025 Biennial Convention in Las Cruces, New Mexico, the assembled delegates and proxies voted on Friday, May 2, by acclamation for three nominees to national office. On June 18, 2025, during a Special Call Meeting the AVA Board of Directors elected Sether Werner by acclamation.

The nominees elected to national office are as follows:



Let us congratulate and welcome the four nominees elected to the American Volkssport Association, also known as America’s Walking Club, leadership team. All nominees assumed their national position as members of the Board of Directors at the close of the General Membership Meeting on May 2, 2025 or immediately after being elected on June 18, 2025.

AVA 2025 BIENNIAL CONVENTION FINANCIAL REPORT by Erin Grosso, AVA Finance Director

A great big THANK YOU to all of you who supported the AVA's 2025 Biennial Convention with your participation. It was a really great time with so many beautiful walks and fun events. We received so many compliments on the Convention Center and the organization and efficiency of registration, credentialing and stamping. Above all, everyone really enjoyed the walks in El Paso, Juarez, White Sands, Mesilla Bosque and Las Cruces. The variety of landscapes and locations were beautiful and the food for the Welcome Reception and the Gala was INCREDIBLE!

On the financial side of the Convention, we were also very successful! The Convention was well attended by 254 registrants and finished with a \$37,641 net profit. We received nearly \$20,000 in grants and sponsorships and negotiated some really great deals on some of the major expenses. While we are very happy with our success, we fell short of our original expectation of 350 registrants which would have earned the AVA nearly \$40,000 in additional revenue. This would have resulted in a net profit of \$77,641.

We are looking forward to choosing a new site for our 2027 Biennial Convention and hope you all will plan to attend and encourage others to join you!

2027 DESTINATION POLL RESULTS by Henry Rosales, President/CEO, AVA

Based on a poll taken during the Regular Membership Meeting, Visit Springfield, MO is the frontrunner destination for the 2027 convention with Visit Norman, OK, in second place and Destination Rogers, AR in third place. The convention committee will review the results and decide how to proceed.

One of the main criteria for hosting a convention used to be there had to be a club in the area to support it. However, while this is still very important, it is no longer required. The main reason being because we no longer have clubs willing to host the convention. The committee also looks at other considerations such as unique walking trails, affordability, and financial support from the host city. The city of Las Cruces provided a \$11,544 grant and a \$7,389 nonprofit discount on the convention center! The cities of El Paso and Juarez provided approximately \$2,500 in in-kind and volunteer support. All registered convention attendees will receive a survey. We appreciate your time in completing it, as your feedback helps us improve.

If you would like to help us plan the next convention, contact the Committee Chair, Jerry Wilson at conventions@ava.org.

AVA 50 ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!! 1976-2026 by Diane Howell Evans, Chair, Programs Committee

Planning is underway for AVA's 50. The first IVV sanctioned volksmarch in the United States took place in Fredericksburg, TX, during the celebration of the American Bicentennial in 1976. The event was hosted by the Volkssportverein Friedrichsburg club, AVA-0001, on June 12-13, 1976. The club regularly hosts a "Founders Day" event to honor this first walk in the USA,

The Programs Committee is looking for ideas from our AVA clubs and walkers on ways to celebrate this half-century milestone, which will also coincide with America's 250! We are currently soliciting at least one sanctioned celebratory walk each month in 2026 high-lighting each of our 10 AVA regions. A special section on the AVA main page will list all 2026 events celebrating AVA's 50th anniversary.

Scheduled events in 2026 celebrating AVA's 50 include the Texas Trail Roundup in February, Atlantic Region Conference in March, and Crazy Horse in June.

We are also researching a special logo for the event sanction stamp, a special event patch, a countdown clock on the AVA website, a celebratory t-shirt and much, much more.

Between now and June 2026, we also encourage AVA walkers to share their AVA experiences over the past 50 years with our membership by writing an article for TAW or the Checkpoint. Suggested topics include: travels, memorable events, health benefits, volunteer experience, social aspects, and many more personal memories and stories.

The year 2026 is now just 6-months away! Please forward any ideas for unique ways to celebrate AVA's 50 and/or the dates of any planned celebratory events to Diane Howell Evans at Programs@ava.org. Thank you.

Pictures Q2 2025

These are from the Q2 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. Thank You!

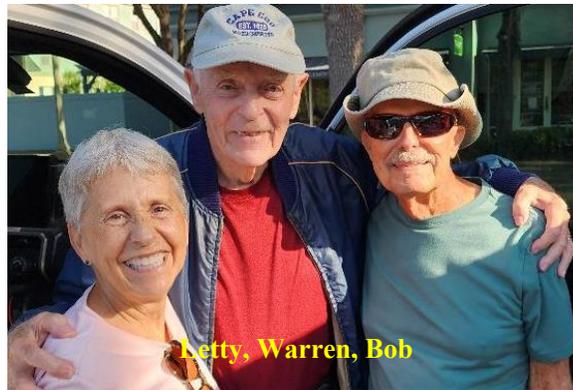
5 April at Spanish Springs

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

19 April at Celebration #2



Registration



Ketty, Warren, Bob

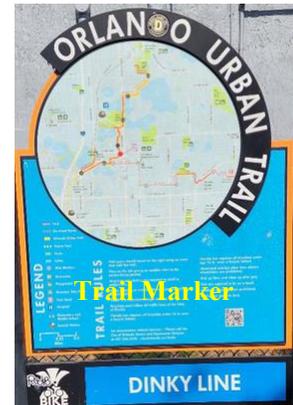


Registration with new Celebration walking club joining our walk

3 May at Orlando North



Sharon A, Jill, Rosemary, Tom, John, Sharon P, Jenny



Howard



Mark, Karen



Advent Health Hospital



17 May at San Sebastian Trailhead



Registration



Registration



Sharon, Cathy, Nancy, Larry



Jenny, Sharon



Walkers



Howard, Dan, John



17 May at Membership Meeting





Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Howard



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to John



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Veronica



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Paul



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Sharon



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Dan



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Dave



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Jenny



MFM Board of Director's presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Cathy



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Emily representing the Restaurant



Jeanne, newly elected AVA SE Regional Director

31 May at Maitland



Cathy presenting Certificate of Appreciation to Tom

7 June at Disney Springs



Tom, Sharon, Jenny



Christopher, Stevie, Reese, Trace,
Quinn, Raegan, Nancy



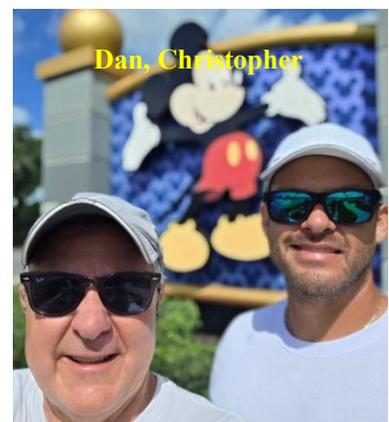
Trace, Quinn, Reese, Nancy



Reese, Raegan

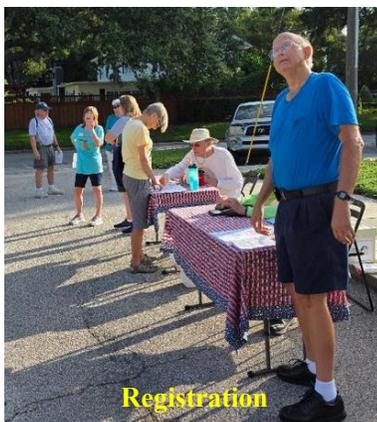


Sharon, Jenny



Dan, Christopher

21 June at Orlando South



Registration



Registration

