

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

### Upcoming walks this quarter:

October 4 & 18, November 1, 7-9 (WAF 34), 15 & 28,  
December 6 & 20  
See Page 5

## MID-FLORIDA MILERS NEWSLETTER

### Comments from the President

by Cathy Metherell, President

Sponsors, Road Journey and WAF 34

First of all, I would like to thank all of you who have stepped up to sponsor one of the Mid-Florida Milers walks. We still have a few walks that need sponsors. Please contact one of the Mid-Florida Milers Board members if you would like to sponsor a walk.

#### Epic Road Journey Part 2.

The drive between San Antonio and Las Cruces with stopping for gas and lunch was about ten plus hours, so I stopped halfway in Fort Stockton Texas for one night. As I left the San Antonio area, I was heading into the heart of Texas Hill country. The further west I traveled the higher the hills became. I began to see signs that said watch for falling rocks and gusty winds as I drove through. I could feel the wind moving my car in places and had to hold on the steering wheel with both hands at times. The vegetation changed from live oak trees to Ashe Juniper to switchgrass.

As I approached Fort Stockton the land started to flatten out and I could see for miles. I saw a lot of cattle ranches and tree farms and other crops before arriving at my hotel in Fort Stockton for the night. I saw a large roadrunner statue called Pacos Pete as I drove through town. Thankfully I made it to the hotel before a significant hail storm moved in. The hail was the size of a quarter. Thankfully there was no damage to my rental car. West Texas is known for having tornados and windstorms during spring and early summer. The whole southwest has been in drought for the last 25 years.

The next day weather called for high winds and blowing dust across the southwest, so I headed out aiming to arrive in Las Cruces by early afternoon. I was about an hour into my journey when the wind started to pick up. I started driving through mountains of west Texas with very steep and rocky cliffs on both sides of the road with very little vegetation. This is where I passed signs saying Continental Divide and entering Mountain Time Zone. I drove through a swarm of insects where western end of I 20 meets I 10. There was almost no traffic in this area. I knew I was getting close to the border when I saw I was heading northwest on I 10 on my dash.

East of El Paso I started to see more tree farms and cattle ranches as well as palm trees. Off to my left I saw a black line and realized it was the border fence. I arrived in Las Cruces at noon with a few hours to spare before 3 PM check in. I was planning to check out West Coast



burger places on this trip and saw a Jack in the Box when I exited the interstate. I gave it 6 out of 10 because of the small size of the burger. I went to the hotel and waited until they had a room ready for me. After being on the road for eleven days I needed to do laundry. The wind started to really pick up as I looked out the window to see clear blue sky turn to a brown haze. Hotel staff was surprised the interstate was not shut down. I had to go out to my car and the sand was hitting my face and legs. The sun was very faint in the sky. I heard the next day some of the walkers were held up for several hours west of Las



Cruces because I 10 was closed due to the dust storm. This was the first time I have seen a dust storm in person.

My first convention walk was New Mexico State University. I like walks that go through institutions of higher learning. I enjoyed talking to a few students who are majoring in agriculture like I did at Auburn University. The walk was for the most part shady. I was near the end of the walk when I started to smell



something sweet that reminded me of churros. After the walk I saw a few people, I had met in Madison, and we talked for a while. I went back to the hotel to finish laundry and eat lunch. After being on the road for over a week I needed some down time to relax. I brought two books with me hoping to read them both. One was Boys in the Boat about the 1936 eight-man rowing team who won gold at the Berlin Olympics. By the time I returned I had finished reading this book. The other book is titled, The Chancellor: The Remarkable Odyssey of Angela Merkel, who is someone I would enjoy meeting someday.

The next walk was in Organ Mountain-Dripping Springs Natural Area with beautiful scenery and lots of history. The walk was a 500 foot climb up a mountain on a rocky path to the historical ruins of Colonel Eugene Van Patten's homestead. It was hard going on the route at times. Before starting the walk, we were told to watch out for snakes. As I was walking around the ruins, I could see why Van Patten built a resort. The magic of Dripping Springs attracted many notable guests like Pat Garrett, Pancho Villa and Billy the Kid. A Tuberculosis Sanatorium was built near Dr. Nathan Boyd, as it was thought high dry climate would help patients recover faster. Due to the drought, there was not much water in the springs. I made my way back down the mountain, I stopped several times to look around at the scenery. I saw one snake on my way about halfway down. I toured the visitor center at the end of the walk and learned a lot about the flora and fauna of the area. There was a poster about soil taxonomy on one wall. Outside the center was a flower garden where many bees were enjoying nectar from the flowers.

Then I was heading back to the convention center to drop off the Central Florida Delights Basket for the silent auction and attend AVA Board Meeting. I went back to my hotel to get ready for the Welcome Reception at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum. The sky was clear and deep blue and there were lovely iris plants blooming outside the entrance. After a tasty buffet style dinner, I toured the museum. There are a lot of exhibits to see and if you are ever in the Las Cruces area, I recommend you visit the museum and Dripping Springs.



The next day I boarded a bus for the International Day of the convention in Ciudad Juarez Mexico walk. I enjoyed the bus ride looking across the border on the way to the walk and seeing El Paso on the way back. I noticed El Paso has some really tall palm trees that I believe might be Washingtonia as they grow well in a hot dry climate. After paying \$0.50 to cross over the border, I found myself walking down a street with no traffic lights or stop signs. First thing I noticed were all the dentist's offices and eye doctors on both sides of the street. We walked in groups according to how fast we could walk. I started out in the slow group however I caught up with the



medium walkers. I managed to talk to a local with the little Spanish I know for about all of 45 seconds. I did talk to another local for about 5 minutes in English who has a friend that lives in Central Florida. I saw a bull fighting arena, passed the famous Juarez sign, an alley way with colorful murals and walked down Father Rahm St. in El Paso. Known as the bicycle priest Father Harold Rahm worked to bring peace to local gangs and other youth outreach in El Paso. The city of Juarez had lunch for the walkers before we headed back across the border. The food



was delicious with salad, beans, corn dish, bread and fruit. The bottled water and cups cakes were imported from Wal-Mart.

I attended the AVA Membership meeting in the afternoon. In the evening there were two speakers while we had Dessert in the Desert. I learned about Chamizal National Memorial which is the site of a 100-year-old boundary dispute between Mexico and United States. Next, I learned that Las Cruces sits at the bottom of a very old and long dormant volcano and the Dripping Springs walk is on the



eastern edge. I very much enjoyed both talks.

For the next two days I boarded a bus to the next two walks. First up was Mesilla Valley State Park located on the Rio Grande west of Las Cruces. Part of the trail was sandy scrub and other was mostly woodlands along the river and is a haven for wildlife. I saw several birds, a rabbit, and some wildflowers including



a butterfly garden near the visitor's center where I saw a Monarch butterfly. For the entire walk I heard quails in the distance. The river was completely dry and both banks are in the United States. I walked down and stood in the dry riverbed for a few minutes before making my way back to the trail. Over time, the Rio Grande changed course three times during the eighteenth century. For those who ordered them, there were boxed lunches waiting for us when we arrived back.

In the afternoon there were workshops on history of New Mexico, Rails to Trails Conservancy and Walking Safety. In the evening there was the AVA Awards Gala and Hall of Fame Inductions. The food was yummy, and I had fajitas and Key Lime pie for dessert. I had a nice time talking with AVA royalty David and Mindy Bonowitz, Kathryn King and the guys from Walking Adventures at my table.

Our departure time to go to White Sands National Park was delayed due to missile testing at White Sands Missile Range. We were told to walk in groups and keep trail markers in sight. Upon arriving at our first stop I noticed how bright the sand was and there were a few clouds in the sky. It was hard going up and down the dunes. Some of them were quite steep. On the second stop I noticed these tracks in the sand and followed one until I saw a black and gray centipede. Staff at the visitor's center told us to look for the elusive white lizard and I saw one. I tried to take pictures however that lizard was not having it. There are signs along the route informing us of desert wildlife in the sands like coyotes, roadrunners, pocket mice, owls and foxes of which most are nocturnal. I may have seen a roadrunner in the distance at one point. I saw ground cover with tiny purple flowers. This was my favorite convention walk. Once again, box lunches were waiting when we arrived back.



In the afternoon I attended another membership meeting. That evening, I tried Whataburger for the first time and Leslie and Fred joined me for dinner. The burger was a bit better than Jack in the Box. I give it a 7 out of 10.

The last convention walk I did was Las Cruces downtown walk. I saw nice murals and statues depicting the history of the area. There were green and purple Prickly Pear cactus plants along the way. Near the end of the walk, I stopped in at a new and used bookstore and made a list of books I would have bought if I had not been flying back at the end of my cross-country trip. There was a farmers' market happening on the walk too. Near the end of the market were food trucks and what do I see but a churros for sale. I bought one from a nice young man who was taking orders while his mother was



doing the cooking. Arriving back at the start I had my books stamped and thanked the convention staff for memorable convention and the staff at the Las Cruces Visitors Center for hosting us. Made my way back to the car and ate part of my rather large churro before getting on the road to continue my journey west. Stay tuned for part three in the next newsletter.

Be sure to check out information and registration for Walk Around Florida 34 in this newsletter. Hope to see you at WAF 34 and out on the trail

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

As of 9/8/25 we have 39 memberships and 57 members. This compares to 46 memberships and 69 members as of 9/8/24. We are somewhat down in membership this year, so if you know someone who might want to walk with us, be sure to invite them to one of our walks.

We did send out our third reminder e-mail, to people who have not renewed yet, a couple of days ago. Once the weather gets a little cooler, I am hopeful that a few more of last year's members will decide to renew.

If you have not yet renewed your membership, it is very easy. If your information has not changed, then all you need to do is pay the membership fee (\$15 for single membership, \$25 for family membership) at any walk and tell us the information is the same. If you need to change some of the information then you can download our [Membership Application Form](#), fill it out and return it and the fee to our walk or mail it to our mailing address.

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

We have added 3 new members this year. We are happy to welcome them to the Mid-Florida Milers. They are:

Kaye Bozard  
Antoire Christie  
Maureen Kennedy

Be sure to welcome them to the club next time you see them on the trails!

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

The quarter of October 1 through December 31 has many exciting volksmarching events planned. The highlight will be WAF 34. It takes place November 7-9. Our club is the lead club for this year’s events. We have four terrific walks and a swim scheduled for the three-day weekend.

The walks take place in Kissimmee, St Cloud, Celebration, and Shingle Creek Regional Park. It will take a team effort and our club leadership is hoping each of you will consider participating in these events, by volunteering and walking the events.

Volunteer opportunities will be available soon. Be on the lookout for a volunteer sign-up in a future e-News.

The WAF 34 Pamphlet and the sign-up Brochure is available on our [club website](#).

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

<b>Q4 Mid-Florida Milers Walks</b>		
4 Oct	International Drive, Miller’s Ale House	8:30-9:15 am
18 Oct	The Villages/Spanish Springs, TownePlace Suites	9:00-9:30 am
1 Nov	Universal, Comfort Inn & Suites	8:30-9:15 am
7-9 Nov	WAF 34	Various
15 Nov	The Villages/Lake Sumter Landing, The Waterfront Inn	9:00-9:30 am
28 Nov	Celebration #1, Starbucks	8:30-9:15 am
6 Dec	Disney Springs, Orange Parking Garage	8:45-9:30 am
20 Dec	Winter Park, AmTrak Station	8:30-9:15am

DATE	Q4 Other Florida Upcoming Traditional Events	REGISTER
4 Oct	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, Emerald Trail, 221 Riverside Ave, Jacksonville, 5/10K walk.	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
18 Oct	First Coast Trail Forgers, Jacksonville, Boneyard/Black Rock Beaches, Sawpit Creek Boat Ramp, Big Talbot Island, Jacksonville, 5/10K walk.	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
25 Oct	Happy Wanderers, Gemini Springs Park, 37 Dirksen Dr, DeBary, 5/10K.	Register 8:30am to 10:00am
1 Nov	First Coast Trail Forgers, Guana Park, 505 Guana River Rd, Ponte Vedra Beach, 5/10K walk.	Register 7:30am, walk at 8:00am
22 Nov	First Coast Trail Forgers, Nocatee Center, 707 Nocatee Center Way, Ponte Vedra, 6/10K walk.	Register 8:30am, walk at 9:00am
6 Dec	First Coast Trail Forgers, Shearwater, 100 Kayak Way, St. Augustine, 5/10K walk.	Register 8:30am, walk at 9:00am
	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
Sharon Axelrod	Orlando	425/450	
Paul Erickson	Maitland	900	9000
John Hunter	Orlando	475/500	5000
Cathy Metherell	Orlando	800	6500
Fred Sheets	Palm Bay		13000
Jenny Thomas	Davenport	200/225	2000

Courtesy The American Wanderer, September 2025

<u>YRE Walk</u>	<u>YRE Walk Monitor</u>	<u>YRE Walk Sponsor</u>
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	JoAnne Cross
Orlando Disney Springs	Paul Erickson	Letty/Bob Zook
Orlando Universal	Paul Erickson	JoAnne Cross
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

**Message from Joan Lanpher** by Joan Lanpher, MFM Club Member

I wish to thank the many Milers for their notes, cards, and prayers after I fractured my left leg’s femur in 3 places. The 3 weeks in the hospital was not fun. Mike and daughters Terry and Kelly rotated Mommy sitting duties. The 2-3 therapy sessions daily were intense but really helped. I completed in-home Physical Therapy (PT) and out-patient PT on August 15. I graduated to a cane, but still use the rolling walker for longer distances, and completed, slowly, two Group 5k walks in August. I continue to walk, exercise in the community pool, and go to the gym. I’m happy to have gotten this far and look forward to WAF 34 and walking in our old “walking grounds”.

Thanks again for all the prayers and good wishes. See you at WAF!

**WALK AROUND FLORIDA – CELEBRATE WALKING!** by Cathy Metherell, John McClellan and Alice Lawrence

We hope you will join us from November 7—9 to celebrate walking at WAF34 in Orlando, Florida! We’ll be getting an early start on next year’s 50th anniversary of American volkssporting, where our next WAF will be a featured Regional event on the 2026 AVA anniversary calendar.

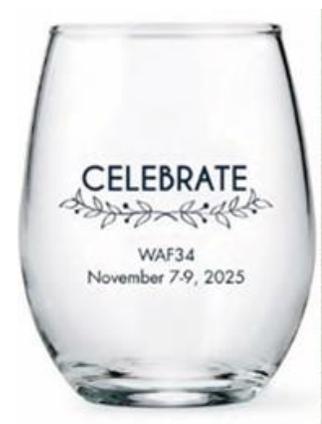
The pre-registration brochure for this year’s weekend is now available. You have until October 7th to register for the group rate (\$117+taxes) at our hotel – the Fairfield Inn & Suites Orlando – Kissimmee/Celebration, and until October 25th to submit your pre-registration. Pre-registration will reserve a place for the dinner (space limited) and sign-up for events and awards – or you can register for individual events when you arrive. Ford’s Garage at the Vineland Outlets Center will be our Saturday night dinner venue. A popular chain of American restaurants founded in 2012 in Florida, Ford’s Garage features design and décor reminiscent of a 1920’s-era service station. Ford’s Garage is where “great food meets vintage vibes.”

Our walks at WAF34 include two “old Florida” towns – Kissimmee and St. Cloud, that have grown to be bustling Orlando suburbs. Both are scenic lakeside villages that offer a bevy of downtown murals along with historic and cultural sites and markers. Our third walk is in the Disney-planned community of Celebration itself, with its quaint town center, luxury houses, and miles of nature trails connecting the entire neighborhood. There’s also been a change of venue for Sunday since our last article.

The new Sunday morning walk is from the Osceola County Welcome Center & Museum on the Shingle Creek Regional Trail including the “Pioneer Village” about 2km out from the start/finish point. Single Creek is the northernmost headwater of the Everglades. The regional trail started with humble beginnings of just over 1 mile but now includes over 17 paved miles (of 32 planned) open for all trail users to enjoy. We’ll see our customary 5k or 10k of that, but you are welcome to walk further if you wish! Special program qualifiers available across our 4 walks include: Par for the Course, Rails-to-Trails, Town Hall/City Hall, Walking with America’s Veterans, and Walking the USA A—Z for letters C, K, and S.

For our A-Award this year we’ve ordered elegant stemless wine glasses to further our celebration! As per usual, WAF34 will also include games and contests, good friends and new memories celebrating our shared love of walking together.

You can find the downloadable pre-registration brochure along with more information leading up to WAF34 on all three club websites: [www.midfloridamilers.org](http://www.midfloridamilers.org); [www.happywanderersfl.org](http://www.happywanderersfl.org) and [www.suncoastsandpipers.org](http://www.suncoastsandpipers.org)



**SOUTHEAST REGIONAL DIRECTOR** by Jeanne Stokes, SE Regional Director and Mid-Florida Milers member

As a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT), I work behind the scenes in healthcare to keep data accurate and systems running smoothly. But my heart is in motion—literally. I believe walking is one of the simplest, most powerful ways to support mental, physical, and social well-being. I’m convinced that the foundation of wellness lies in how we move, how we engage, and who we surround ourselves with. I’m passionate about fitness, connection, and helping others embrace wellness as a lifestyle, not just a goal.

**A BITTERSWEET GOODBYE – THANK YOU, UPSTATE PATHFINDERS**

**FAMILY** by Rob McDaniel, Founding Member (Note: Mike and Joan Lanpher are members and Mike has been the Club President)

It’s with a grateful heart and a touch of sadness that I share some news: after notifying our members and completing our final audit with AVA: America’s Walking Club, the UpState PathFinders Volksmarch Club of Greenville, SC (Est. 2011) will officially be closing.

From the very beginning, this club has meant the world to me. After retiring from the military and moving to Clearwater, FL, I discovered the Suncoast Sandpipers and was reintroduced to Volksmarching—an activity I loved during my time in Germany. My days in Europe were filled with driving to new places, doing 10km walks, and collecting the decorative German Bier Steins along the

way. That same joy and passion led to the founding of the UpState PathFinders when I moved to Greenville in 2010.

We built something special: award-winning publicity for consecutive years - thank you to the talents of our late son-in-law, Martin Britton. We grew to 200+ members, and our walk events were filled with laughter, community, and purpose. I had the honor of serving as Deputy Regional Director for six years under John McClellan, Kathryn King, and meeting many wonderful walkers throughout the Southeast.

Life has its unexpected turns—health challenges eventually led me to step away after 12 incredible years as the club's president and AVA altogether. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to Michael & Joan Lanpher, who picked up the torch in 2023. Despite their dedication, the club has faced low turnout and now, they are facing health concerns. With that, the club has decided to close this chapter.

To everyone who walked with us, supported us, and helped make the UpState PathFinders what it was—thank you. Your friendship, your miles, and your memories meant everything. It was a great run—and one I'll never forget.

### **AVA SPECIAL PROGRAMS USA/AVA ANNIVERSARY HURRAH** by Terry Lunghofer

The USA-AVA Anniversary Hurrah is a new Special Program starting in 2026 – The 250th Anniversary of the USA and the 50th of the AVA. Due to the uniqueness of the anniversary years, this program will only run from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026. Redeem completed books by December 31, 2027. This program is designed to emphasize the entire history of both the USA and the AVA, not just the events around 1776 or 1976. Each of us has our sense of the history that we wish to celebrate: It could be the men elected to office, the conflicts we've had, the geography we celebrate, the evolution of transportation, the trails and waterways followed, the arts we preserve, the culture we wish to know better, the schools and the museums which preserve history, the events of the 23 remaining AVA clubs from the original 100, the 181 still sanctioned YRE/Sea events of the original 250, the sites of our first 22 national biennial conventions, or all of the expired special programs which you missed. The sub-program you wish to accomplish within this Special Program is your choice. Space has been provided within the record book for recording an abbreviated code for some potential sub-programs or you may devise your own. Complete twenty-five (25) events to receive an embroidered patch reflecting the national geography highlighted in the Song "America the Beautiful". Every AVA sanctioned event: Traditional, YRE, SEA, or guided walk, is a qualifying event. You may complete 25 different events or you can complete a single event 25 times if your geography is isolated. Each stamp impression must be paid for and completed at a separate time. Since many locations may not have a sanctioned event which goes by a site you wish to see or visit, complete the closest event which is available and visit the true site before or after.

You will find descriptions of all AVA sanctioned events, both traditional and YRE/SEA, at the website [ava.org](http://ava.org) under the Find an Event tab. Revisiting the site is recommended since new events may be sanctioned which celebrate an individual club's version of history.

This Special Program is hosted by Falcon Wanderers Volkssport Association in Colorado Springs. The books will become available on November 1, 2025. Mail your book request and a check for \$14 payable to Falcon Wanderers, c/o Terry Lunghofer, P.O. Box 17162, Colorado Springs, CO 80935-7162. Please include your mailing address and email address with your request. For more information, contact Terry Lunghofer at [tlunghofer0031@gmail.com](mailto:tlunghofer0031@gmail.com) or 719-597-4307 (H).

# Pictures Q3 2025

These are from the Q3 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 July at Celebration #1



Registration



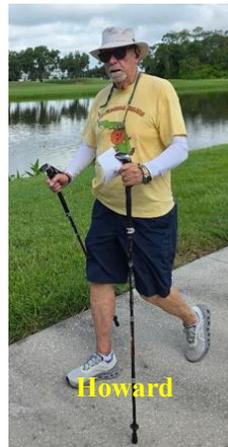
Cathy presenting Annual Award to Letty



Cathy presenting Annual Award to Michael



Tom, Sharon



Howard



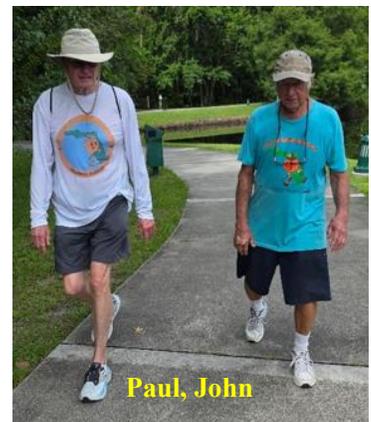
Bob, Petra, Letty



Michael, Bernadette



Jenny, Sharon



Paul, John

19 July at Oakland Nature Preserve



Registration



Registration



Registration



Oakland Nature Preserve



Oakland Water Tower



Angel, Nicole, Michelle



Bernadette, Dave, Jane



Lorenzo, Charmaine, Indira



Indira, Charmaine, Lorenzo



Fred



Grasshopper on the Trail



Jenny, Sharon



John, Paul



Kaye



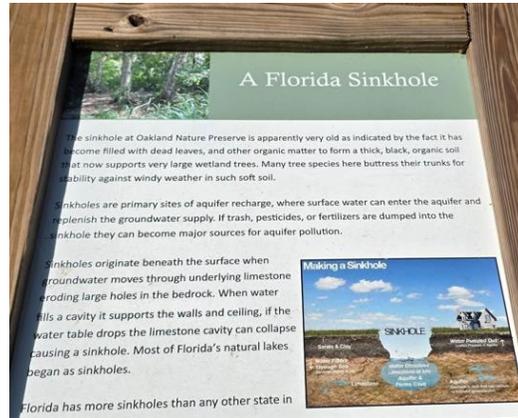
Kevin, Susan



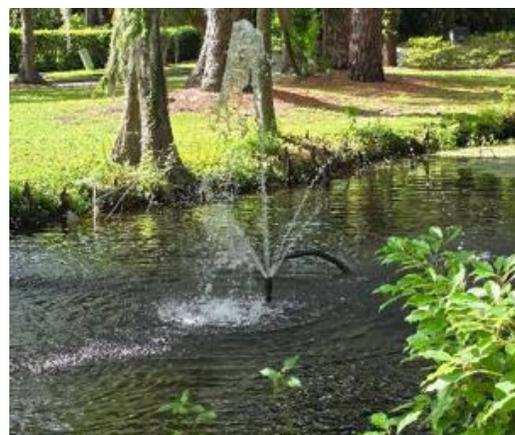
Scenery



Sharon, Jenny, Sharon



2 August at Winter Park





16 August at **Orlando Downtown**





30 August at Orlando North





Kaye



Paul, Sharon, Debbie, John, Jenny

6 September at Maitland



Kaye, Toni, Ralf, Sharon



Sharon, Bernadette, Cathy, John



Sharon, Bernadette, John



Howard



Bernadette, John, Sharon, Dan

20 September at Celebration #2



John, Paul, Sharon, Jenny



