

CALOOSA WINNIES
Local Chapter

April 4, 2016 the Caloosa Winnies were off to a new adventure—spending a week in the Florida Keys for our monthly meeting! We traveled to Marathon, Florida to the wonderful Jolly Roger RV Resort located right on the Florida Gulf waterfront! Our adventure began with most of us arriving during the afternoon—in the pouring rain!!! It hardly ever rains in Florida in April—and after setting up coaches we all met at the pavilion overlooking the water for Happy Hour at 4:00pm. 28 coaches in all attended the event. Luckily, the rain went away by the next day and we had a perfectly beautiful week!



Some of our new members joined us for this week—David & Sue Riling, Robert & Joann Dalton, Rick & Sarah Moseley, and Tom Dines. We also welcomed Rich & Sandy Hilton who are members of the Funtime Travelers.



With many fun activities in the area we went in small groups to visit places like the Turtle Hospital. Here they have several types of turtles that have been injured around the country and provide a rehab program to help them get well and survive. Many are taken back to the ocean once they are healed.

Some of the guys decided to go fishing on a party boat one morning, so about dawn they carpooled down the road and spent a half day enjoying the ride! All totaled they caught LOTS of fish and the boat captains cleaned the fish after the return trip. The guys had a great time to say the least!! On the left is a picture of Russ Bosch cooking the fish for a dinner entrée for the group!!



One of Jerry Miller's fish!



Some of the other excursions to local attractions were the Crane Point Nature Center and Historic Park. A narrated tour on a tram took us all around the area to learn the history. The Adderly family first moved to the property in 1903 and the house they build is still standing! The Crane family build a home in 1953 and lived there the rest of their lives. The park is filled with many trees, bushes, mangroves, water holes, just a great experience to see how people lived in Florida at that time.



Of course the week would not be complete without FOOD!! To the right is a picture of one of the “grill out” nights. The Happy Hour snacks and potluck dinners that happened every day were special with such a wide variety of selections!! The ladies outdid them selves with such GREAT dishes!



And then there were the gorgeous sunsets! Chairs came out along the seawall every evening to enjoy the view! We were not disappointed because every evening was more beautiful than the last! It was so relaxing, and enjoyable!



Right in Jolly Roger Park some of water activities such as swimming, snorkeling, fishing and kayaking were available to us! As you can see in this picture, Lew Fish is enjoying a jaunt on the water! There is a nice warm pool on the grounds, and many of us took advantage of it and enjoyed a restful sun time and swim! Bikes were a popular sport and many of us brought along our bikes and went for rides down the bike trail along U.S. Route 1. Some of us even did a lot of walking around the park to keep those steps popping on our Fitbits!



Of course no trip to the Florida Keys is complete without a day at Key West! Many of us went on different days and a group of us went with folks who had not been there ever! So we had to introduce them to Mallory Square and the action that takes place on the Square at sunset! On the right you see a picture of a juggler on a unicycle juggling fire sticks! That's just one of many daredevil things one sees on Mallory Square! Many boats



go out for sunset cruises like the picture on the left, and the cameras are snapping away to catch the view as the sun sets! Part of the day we did a trolley tour that explained the rich history of Key West back the shipwreck days! Dinner at a local restaurant was perfect—and of course shopping is always fun!! The history of Key West is amazing and there really is no other place like this city!

One evening we held a 50/50 raffle and gave away 3 prizes to the winners: David Nobert, Karen Autry & Sally Sims! The manager of Jolly Roger also have us some t-shirts to raffle and those winners were Jim Carney & Janis Fumia!! Congrats to the winners!!!



During the week finds some of the group sitting by the seawall in front of the pavilion enjoying the birds flying looking for their dinner. It was also entertaining watching people launch boats from the ramp and also retrieving them at the end of their voyage!

Another group adventure on a beautiful sunny day we went to nearby Bahia Honda State Park. There we participated in an education walk/scavenger hunt. Here were 6 places we had to find with directions that were provided by the park ranger. It included a walk along the beach and a visit to the historic old railroad bridge.



To the right are the pictures of the group beachcombing and to the left is the view of the gulf side beach from the old bridge.

Geocaching is another hobby that is interesting to pursue, and Ed Thomas led us on a hunt to locate a Geocaching site near the railroad bridge. After a short search—we found what was hidden!



At mile marker 77 on the Keys Highway U.S. #1 is a fun place to visit and some of the group went there! Robbie's Marina is famous for the HUGE tarpon fish that hang out there—waiting to be fed of course! For a few dollars one can buy a bucket of fish and head to the docks to feed them! They jump and entertain the crowds! There are tiki hut booths to visit there and shop to your hearts content! To the right is a photo of the fish!



Some of the group had to leave for home on Saturday and we bid them farewell and a safe journey. The remainder of our members decided to give the ladies a break from cooking so dinner OUT was on the menu! We decided on Island Fish House in the town of Marathon. We were seated outside under the tiki hut and as you'll see in the photo on the right it was a good choice and enjoyed by all! THANKS to Dave Wilkie for this photo!

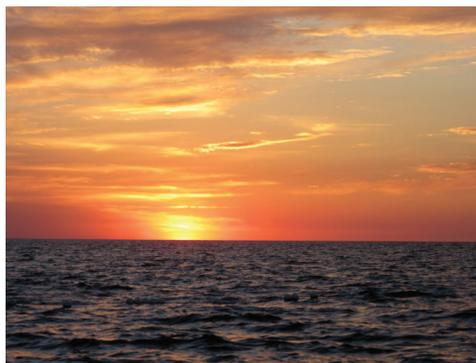


The Caloosa members and guests that attended this event had a GREAT week with so many activities to enjoy! The week was such a wonderful experience that 18 of our coaches will return to this park in November for Thanksgiving week! AND we also reserved another week in November 2017! A HUGE thank you goes out to the Jolly Roger staff who were OUTSTANDING with their service and so welcoming to our group!!

Our next meeting is May 5—8, 2016 at Alligator Park in Punta Gorda, FL to celebrate the “Kentucky Derby” weekend. Our annual Hat Parade and Derby betting will be part of the agenda as well as a movie, great food and other fun games!

We invite any WIT member to join us, check our website at www.winniegators.org/Caloosa for our schedule. There has been a Facebook page also launched for sharing of information and pictures! We also advertise our schedule on the WIT Club website and magazine—Who’s Inviting Travelers. Consider yourselves welcome to come join in on the fun!!

Submitted by
Nancy Miller
Wagon Queen



Jolly Roger sunset!