

CALOOSA WINNIES

Local Chapter

May 5—8, 2016 the Caloosa Winnies celebrated the Kentucky Derby Weekend at Alligator Park, Punta Gorda, FL. The co-hosts for the weekend were Bud & Sue Swift, John & Jean Weicherding, Dave & Barb Wilkie. As usual, our parkers, Bud & Dave got everyone in the right site in time for our 4pm Happy Hour!

Special guests Stewart & Tammy Smith, the new WIT Eastern Area Reps, joined us for the fun! The clubhouse was decorated with horses and other derby decorations. A Ham dinner was served by the hosts and the members contributing various dishes. Our ever popular Ice Cream Social found our hosts scooping the members favorite flavors, and sundaes were enjoyed by everyone!

The evening entertainment was a Walt Disney movie, “Miracle of the White Stallions”, a story about the White Lipizzan Horses and their history during World War II. Everyone settled into comfortable chairs to enjoy the movie.



Ice cream line & hosts scooping!



Kitchen detail by Dave & John

Friday morning found the hosts preparing for the Pancake Breakfast. On the menu was, of course, custom made pancakes, plain or blueberry, sausage, a variety of fruit, juice & coffee. The blueberries were fresh picked and donated by John & Jean Weicherding, and they were DELICIOUS! THANKS to Dave Wilkie, Dave Nobert & Bud Swift for cooking! Everyone pitched in for cleanup and we were off to the rest of the days activities!



Our volunteer “flippers”



Miniature Golf was next on the agenda and car pools were formed and off we went to Port Charlotte to Fish Cove Golf for an exciting and competitive game! Teams were formed randomly, the game was a shotgun start, so teams were assigned to different holes to begin. As you can see from the pictures, the games were pretty intense!



Throughout the course you could hear exclamation of “YEA! Hole In One”, or WHOOPS! Or do-over! The scenery by the course was beautiful, showing off the Peace River! At the end of the tournament we all returned to Alligator Park in time for lunch!



At 2pm on Friday some of the group met to work on a project with Carolyn Thomas. The state club is making a quilt to be raffled next February, and the chapters have been asked to contribute squares for the quilt. Carolyn had some suggestions so we all went to work designing scrabble type blocks—some related to traveling, camping, RVing, or whatever we could make up! After about an hour we had about 5 or 6 squares completed!

Happy Hour was at 4pm once again, and a 50/50 raffle was held—THANKS to the guys and gals selling tickets! Besides the financial rewards, a basket of goodies was donated to us by Palm RV. The winner of the basket was Ross Ziegler. Financial rewards were as follows: 3rd place, Dave Nobert; 2nd place, Jean Weicherding; 1st place, our guest Stewart Smith! We are happy to report that Stewart donated his winnings back to the chapter to be forwarded to our charity the Joshua House. Very generous, Stewart, and we thank you!



The Winners!
L to R: Jerry, Barb, Nancy & Pete

Next was the time everyone was waiting for—the Golf Tournament Awards! Best low score for the men went to Jerry Miller! Best low score for the ladies was Barb Wilkie! Best low team score was Nancy Miller & Pete Maceri!

THEN we had a TIE for the HIGHEST Score overall, (which is not good in golf!) To the right is the picture of the “winners” for a score of 55—Carolyn Thomas, Tammy Smith & Diane Cipolla!



L to R: Carolyn, Tammy & Diane

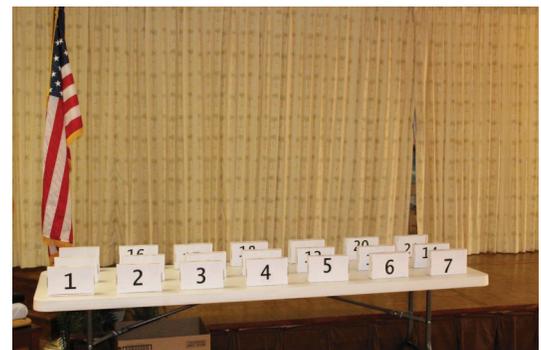


Of course we had a “prize” for the TEAM that had the highest score (again—not a good thing!) But they were good sports and accepted their certificates! See the photo on the left: (Left to right) are Diane Cipolla, John Weicherding & Stewart Smith.

To the right is a picture of the players who scored multiple “Holes in One” and they were presented with special certificates! We also had some certificates for some players who were not so lucky with their scores! The certificates were titled, “I Tried Really Hard But It Just Wasn’t My Day”. We shall refrain from publishing their names so as not to cause them embarrassment! Be looking for rest of the pictures on the Winnie Gators website!



At 5pm we left the RV park to head out for dinner at nearby Burnt Store Grill. The food and service was great, and we finished in time to return to the park for our evening game, sponsored by Dave & Barb Wilkie. The game had various titles, “Let’s Make A Deal, or Deal or No Deal” - and it turned out to be such a fun game full of surprises and LUCKY guesses! Each couple was given a chance to pick a numbered box, and keep the box that would have a “Caloosa Dollar” value inside. OR they could “deal” for the surprise item behind the curtain!



Here are a few pictures of the contestants debating about whether to keep the box or go for the curtain!



Carolyn & Ed



John & Jean with "host" Monty!



Stewart & Tammy with "Monty"

It was a fun game and surprising how many contestants kept the box hoping for a "million" Those who took the "Prize" behind the curtain got such exciting prizes—they were happy with their choice! And there was a box with the MILLION inside—box # 17! Several contestants picked that box but surrendered it for the curtain prize.



THANKS to Dave & Barb for making this game so much fun! It takes time—and we appreciate your work!

Saturday morning the hosts were busy in the kitchen getting the ingredients ready for the group to make their "Omelets in a Bag" for breakfast! Jean was busy giving them instructions as they made their choices! Lots of ingredients to pick from and the secret is to make sure the bag was sealed with no air inside! Some newer members were skeptical, but they were reassured this worked! The bags were boiled according the directions and after they were cooked—out popped the perfect omelet! Along with their custom creation, biscuits, fruit, juice & coffee were served to the group. THANKS to everyone who helped clean up—especially the hosts!



At 10:30 am it was time for our business meeting, presided over by President Ed Thomas. All officers were present, and several topics were discussed. As usual, our meeting are fun and informative. Several topics discussed included our plans for the next years calendar. In April, 2017 we are planning another caravan to travel to 3 cities and enjoy other parts of Florida.

The rest of the afternoon was free time to enjoy the pool, go shopping, visit with other members, etc.

At 4:30pm everyone gathered in the clubhouse once again to celebrate our Kentucky Derby Party! The tables were filled with heavy hors d'oeuvres for everyone to indulge in! Jerry Miller & Chris Ross were the "bookies" for the day and they took bets from everyone based on the odds sheets Jerry made. At 5:30 it was time for our annual "Hat Parade". Our judges were introduced—the residents of the park—and they proceeded to inspect and pick the best hats in various categories!





The winners were L to R: Pete Maceri, Joann Maceri, Chris Ross, Jerry Miller, Tom Dines, Dave Nobert & Sally Sims.



Here's a group picture of those who were not camera shy! Great ORIGINAL designs....

Just before the derby kicked off, the betting window was closed and that was a signal for the hosts to prepare the "Caloosa Mint Juleps" This years variety had an additional scoop of ice cream which was nice on a hot day! The race winners were paid off by Jerry & Chris with several members collecting their winnings! THANKS to Jerry & Chris for being our "bookies"!

Next on the evening agenda was the "Horse Relay Race". The teams were formed and instructions given and they were off and running! The teams were split with members on each side of the "track". Each team member had to "ride" their horse to the other side of the room wearing the cowboy hat and carrying the whip. In addition to those rules, each person had to move a plastic horse from one cup to another in order to keep their score.





Of course the race led to lots of laughs, dropped horses, hats and whips but recoveries were made quickly! The first round of races Team 3 lost, so a playoff was staged between Teams 1 & 2.



Team 1 were the winners, led by Captain Dave Nobert!

This was a fun game and THANKS to all the good sports for participating! The Caloosas do like to have fun—and are SO competitive! The Team 1 winners got their prizes of OATS & HONEY granola bars!

Sunday morning at 8:30am it was time for donuts, bagels, coffee and juice before our departures. Since this is our last meeting for the season we wished each other safe travels for those who will be leaving home. This was a fun weekend and the co-hosts did a great job working together!

Special thanks to our guests, Tammy & Stewart Smith for choosing our group to spend the weekend with! We really enjoyed getting to know you and wish you the BEST in your new adventures! We hope you will be back to join us another time! You are always welcome to the Caloosas!

Our next official meeting will be November 3—6, 2016 at Gulf Waters RV Resort near Ft. Myers Beach, FL. Our dates are published on the website www.winniegators.org, as well as in the WIT magazine section “Who’s Inviting Travelers”. We always welcome any WIT members to join us!

Happy Trails!

Nancy Miller
Wagon Queen