

CALOOSA WINNIES

Local Chapter

February 18—21, 2016 the Caloosa Winnies attended the Florida State Winnie Gators Rally in Sarasota, Florida. Each year the FSWG host the rally for members and visitors from all over Florida and out of state. Each chapter has a volunteer duty to assist the club in making a fun event for all participants. The rally theme was “Back To The 50’s” which proved to be a lot of fun!

This year the Caloosas handled the Greeter duty which means we were the first people the participants encountered as they arrived at the fairgrounds. Our teams of Greeters were located at 3 stations guiding folks to the proper places for entry to the rally. Since this was a new venue for the rally, our planning was extensive to make sure we had all the bases covered. Our station #1 waved to the attendees and checked credentials as they arrived, then sent them on to station #2 which was staffed with our “Pom Pom” ladies!! Their job was to make sure the coach drivers turned wide enough to miss the curb! (Which many did not miss it!) Then the coaches were waved on to station #3 where the guys supervised the entry onto the grounds which included several adventures such as disconnecting towed vehicles and communicating with the parkers. Our team of Greeters included the members inside the office to verify registrations for participants, vendors and unregistered attendees. That team was headed by Jerry Miller & Walter Feldgoise along with some of the Caloosa ladies. Our taxi drivers, Jim & Sally Rayburn were busy delivering water, shuttling workers, picking up and delivering chairs.

A HUGE thanks to our Presidents Ed & Carolyn Thomas who took the new tasks under their wing and organized the plan for each station, and Nancy Miller who did the work scheduling. The entire plan worked extremely well, and we are proud of the job we did! The weather was just GREAT as it was sunny each day, after having a not so nice few months previous to the rally!

Several of our members arrived on Monday to begin laying out the plan and all totaled we had 30 coaches registered! On Tuesday and Wednesday after the gates were closed, we had our Happy Hour combined with pizza and sub sandwiches for all! Previous to the rally we mentioned some of the ladies were making cookies for desserts. Well, we ended up with about 50 dozen cookies over the 2 days! The baking was enjoyed by EVERYONE!! This time of sharing food was also the forum for checking how we were doing with the Greeters duties.

Thursday was the official opening ceremonies to welcome everyone to the rally. After the ceremony ended, lunch was served and the Greeters went back to work! Thursday the next event was on tap!



Caloosa Row Party food! 1st serving!

The rally Row Party was on the agenda for 5:00pm and all the chapters had an area in the main hall offering food and drinks to the attendees. The Caloosas had a HUGE variety food spread over 4 tables! The line waiting patiently was all the way to the back of hall! After several servings spread out, it didn't take long for our tables to be emptied! MANY THANKS to the ladies for all their efforts to make this event success!



The line for Caloosa Row Party food was all the way to the back of the hall!

Friday morning our Greeter duties were over and now it was time for the Caloosas to have some fun! At 11:00am we hosted the annual Pet Parade! The judges were the vendors in the hall and they were given instructions on the categories to judge for the pets! As usual, it was a noisy event! But so many dogs were dressed with costumes, and some did tricks, it turned out to be a fun time! The winners of the costume category were Becky & Chuck Smalley and their matching dogs!! What a clever idea and they stole the show! THANKS to the Caloosa team who worked the event!



Friday evening after dinner it was time for entertainment! The disc jockey, Anthony Mac provided music for dancing which found some of the Caloosas on the dance floor!

Throughout the rally there were several seminars to attend, vendors to visit and of course Happy Hours to share. On Friday and Saturday prior to dinner, the Caloosas hosted Happy Hour at the Millers' coach! It was a HUGE circle of friends, and we were **DELIGHTED** to welcome new members to our group!

(L) John & Jean Weicherding,
(R) Belinda & Walter Feldgoise



- Robert & Joann Dalton, Ft. Myers, FL**
- Thomas Dines, Marco Island, FL**
- Michael & Janice Dippel, Sun City Center, FL**
- John & Susan King, Lutz, FL**
- Mitch & Sandra Loiselle, Jericho, VT**
- Howard & Susan Melton, Plantation, FL**
- Rick & Sarah Moseley, Tierra Verde, FL**
- Mark & Susan Okkerse, Punta Gorda, FL**
- Herb & Dede Varner, Winter Haven, FL**

On 2 different days many door prizes were given away to the attendees, including almost 30 baskets donated by the Caloosa Winnies! THANKS to the generosity of the chapter member donations, Janice Cummings made up just wonderful prize baskets that were the hit of the evenings! THANKS to Janice for all the shopping and packing baskets!

Saturday evening dinner was held about 5:30pm with all the chapters sitting together on one side of the tables and guests on the other. There were so many rows of Caloosa members—it was a sea of Royal Blue!! We were PROUD to have such a great representation of our chapter!! The evening entertainment was special with the group “The DelPrados” from Cape Coral. They are well known around Florida and these 5 gentleman played 50’s music for everyone to enjoy while listening and dancing! Several of the Caloosas were seen in their 50’s poodle skirts, jeans, t-shirts and leather jackets! Sorry we didn't get pictures of that!

Sunday morning the rally came to an end with a business meeting and departures. It was a fun event and the Caloosas were off for home and looking forward to our next meeting March 17—20, 2016 at Lazy Days in Seffner Florida.

Submitted by
Nancy Miller