



friendship force
WISCONSIN - MADISON



ffwis.org

JULY 2021

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

With summer in full swing, it is with a tremendous sense of gratitude that we have just returned from our first long distance trip in over a year to visit family. When our granddaughter and her parents moved from their temporary home/pandemic retreat with us last year, nine-month-old Jane was just beginning to pull herself up to a standing position.

On our visit last week, there was no stopping Jane as she propelled her way through the park, the house, and onto grandma and grandpa's laps for yet another story. Such a gift to reconnect in person! We've been missing those hugs.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our club picnic on July 28! Such a blessing to be returning to a greater degree of normalcy. I applaud all in the club who have organized, participated in, and supported the wide range of online cultural programs and in-person outdoor activities and other events we have offered throughout the past year and a half. We have been an active group despite the multitude of pandemic related challenges.

As our vaccination rates continue to climb in Dane County, we are ready to resume some journey activities, but are taking a cautious and practical approach and are accepting people from the US only. Our focus is on domestic journeys, the first being the incoming *Escape to Wisconsin by Bike* journey September 13-20. I encourage you to support and participate in journey related activities and hosting as much as you feel comfortable doing so.

Although we have international matches for 2022 our first outbound journey will most likely be our assigned journey to Dallas, Texas. While we were matched with international clubs for 2022, it seems that they are not yet comfortable or ready to plan to receive visitors from other countries. We continue to hope for better news. Many thanks to our Journey Manager, Stephanie Sorensen, who continues to work through this dynamic travel environment with a steady, pragmatic determination. Her report follows in this Newsletter.

Kathy Speck

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monthly Board Meeting:

The FFI Madison Board meets VIRTUALLY on the second Wednesday of the month @ 12:30 pm

July 6: Lunch at Vintage Brewery. "Activities"

July 7, 14, 21, 28: Concerts on the Square. "Programs"

July 12: Lets Walk, Let's Hike. "Activities"

July 22: Bike Ride. "Activities"

July 22: Trivia Night. "Programs"

July 24: Opera in the Park. "Programs"

July 28: Summer Picnic. "Activities"

July 29: Second Harvest Food Bank. "Activities"

Sept. 13-20: Tour de Wisconsin. "Journeys"

Sept. 14 : Club Welcome Dinner for Cyclists. "Activities".

Sept 19: Club Farewell Dinner for Cyclists. "Activities"

Please check our Wisconsin – Madison website (ffwis.org) for any additions, updates, or corrections to event schedules during the month, and keep an eye out for email updates as well. We don't want you to miss anything!

Now that we seem to live on ZOOM, we remind you that ZOOM support is available from FFI and from our club.

View the FFI Zoom training video at

<https://vimeo.com/436845540>.

Or Contact Peter Kaufman pkaufman@gmail.com

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JOURNEYS

GET READY FOR THE TOUR DE WISCONSIN

September 13 – 20 we are hosting bicyclists from all over the US to enjoy our local bike trails.



We need more hosts. You do not need to be a bicyclist to host. Several of our visitors will be driving and bringing their bikes. Some will be flying to Madison and will need to rent a bike. For them, we will need hosts who can transport a bike to the start of the day's ride and pick the cyclist up at the end. If you are a cyclist and can carry more than one bike, please volunteer to host.

We are still receiving inquiries and we would like to accept as many people as possible, so please let our Journey Manager know if you are willing to host. This is a relatively easy hosting situation since our guests will mostly be out biking and you do not have to be a cyclist or go with them to activities every day.

We also will need small dinner hosts as it will be difficult for hosts who are biking to do that as well as cook. We need people to be "on call" who can pick someone up if they fall or their bike breaks and they cannot finish the ride that day. We hope this doesn't happen, but we like to be prepared. We will need riders from our club to go with the group even if you cannot host.

We will be having a Club Welcome dinner on September 14th and a farewell on September 19th - so keep those evenings open to meet the cyclists.

Please contact Stephanie Sorensen as soon as you are able and let her know what you are willing to do to help and make this Journey a success during this week in September (13th to 20th). Thanks so much!

Stephanie Sorensen, Journey Manager
ssorensen@gmail.com
608 819-6646

JOURNEYS

Our prospects for international travel in 2022 are not promising so far. Unfortunately, all FF clubs in New Zealand have decided not to accept any incoming Journeys in 2022 (except, maybe Australia). So we will not be going to New Zealand or New Caledonia in 2022. We know many of you were interested, and we have had extensive communications with all parties and hope that we will be able to make that journey in the future.

The US/Canadian border still requires a 3-night hotel stay, COVID tests, and a 14-day quarantine even for vaccinated visitors. The Toronto club, which we are matched to visit in 2022, told us that they will re-evaluate the situation in September.

Based on these conditions, our Board decided to initially concentrate on domestic journeys for 2022. We look forward to completing our assigned Dallas journey. FFI is working on US based journey organizing requests and we continue to stay in contact with FFI and other US clubs and monitor developments.

Travel Safety Issues

With respect to COVID safety, we will always follow CDC and local guidelines in place at the time of travel. We also will require every Host and Ambassador from our club to be vaccinated and will ask anyone visiting us to also be vaccinated. For now our Board decided that we are accepting visitors from the U.S. only, but will update members as any changes may occur.

We have many members who can offer advice and guidance on how to manage this effort. Stephanie Sorensen has an excellent manual for your reference. Contact her at (608) 819-6646 or ssorensen268@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES

2021 ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC

Our energetic Activities Committee Chair has scheduled our annual IN-PERSON Summer Picnic for July 28! See the attachment at the end of this Newsletter for more information and sign-up instructions.

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ACTIVITIES

BOOK CLUB



The Friendship Force Book Club met on Monday, June 28 to discuss "A Committee of One" by Pat Holt. Those present were Dorothy Baldwin, Gail Holmes, and Reta Haring. A good discussion of the living conditions in refugee camps followed.

The Book Club will not be meeting this summer so our next meeting will be Monday, Oct. 25th at 7:00 pm on Zoom where we will discuss "Transcendent Kingdom" by Yaa Gyasi.

BIKING

McFarland/Garver Feed Mill Loop - Thursday, July 22nd (rain date Friday, July 23rd)

Cyclists will meet at McDaniels Park in McFarland at 10 am. The park is on Lake Waubesa just beyond the Green Lantern in McFarland (4806 McDaniel Ln.). The ride is approximately 20 miles.

The group will ride across the boardwalk to Lake Farms Park, continue on the Capital City Trail into Madison/Monona, along the Lake Monona Trail/Capital City Trail to Garver Feed Mill. Lunch break will be at Ian's Pizza. After lunch, cyclists will return to McDaniel Park via east Madison and McFarland bike trails and side streets. Cyclists should be back to McDaniels Park at approximately 2 pm.

If you are interested in joining this ride, please let Jan know by Sunday, July 18th.

Jan Hornback
jhornback@wisc.edu
608-216-4454 phone/txt

June 22nd was a beautiful day for eleven bikers to enjoy the Glacial River Trail near and in Fort Atkinson. The group rode from south of Fort Atkinson through a covered bridge on the trail into Fort Atkinson. There were many sculptures to enjoy along the trail and through the Lion's Park. After crossing the Rock River, the group returned to the Jones Farm Deli and Ice Cream Shop for a delicious lunch and ice cream! The ride was 18 miles and mostly flat with a few up and down hills.

ACTIVITIES

BIKING

We try to include lunch in the middle of each ride so we can ride it off on our return trip!



Here are the happy riders with the Flying Pig at Jones Farm

LET'S WALK LET'S HIKE

Our next walk will be on **Monday, July 12, at 10:30 a.m., in the Badger Prairie County Park, located at 495 Enterprise Drive, Verona, WI 53593.**

You can find additional information about the park at: <https://www.danecountyparks.com/park/BadgerPrairie>

If you are interested in joining us, please RSVP to magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com, so that I can send you parking and meeting point information, and a map about our planned path. I will also contact you in case we have to cancel the walk due to inclement weather. See you there!

If you are fully vaccinated against Covid-19, wearing a mask will not be necessary. However, if you are not vaccinated for any reason, please wear a mask to protect your friends. We thank you!

Our June hike took four of our members to the Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Middleton for a leisurely 3.5 Miles hike, while enjoying great conversations. The prairie had a multitude of colorful flowers. We tried to locate the Burial and Effigy Mounds on Frederick's Hill, and watched in awe as the ice-cold water bubbled up from the ground at Frederick's Spring. Those "sand boils" are mesmerizing, and they never disappoint!

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ACTIVITIES

LET'S WALK LET'S HIKE

Interpretive signs next to the Indian Mounds and the Spring provided a glimpse into the rich Native American history of the area: "The reason for choosing this location [as burial ground] was its proximity to the spring, the source of the Pheasant Branch Creek. It was thought that springs were "portals to the Lower World" and so by burying the dead on the mounds, they were halfway between the sky (the "Upper World") and the spring, linking the two journeys of the dead." How fascinating!



Happy hikers at Pheasant Branch Conservancy

SECOND HARVEST FOODBANK



Our service project at the **Second Harvest Foodbank** will be on **Thursday, July 29, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at 2802 Dairy Drive.**

Recently the results of an extensive study on hunger were released on the Second Harvest website (secondharvestmadison.org).

The study showed that of those served by Second Harvest in southwestern Wisconsin:

- A majority live in a household that brings in less than \$20,000 per year.
- A majority of households have someone that works at least 30 hours per week.
- Households struggling with hunger have to use a number of ways to make ends meet like relying on

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ACTIVITIES

SECOND HARVEST FOODBANK

cheap and unhealthy food and watering down food and drinks.

- People without access to enough money have to make tough choices between paying for food or basics like housing, utilities, transportation and medical care.
- Hunger has a significant impact on health. High blood pressure and higher rates of diabetes result from not having enough healthy food.
- Hunger knows no race, gender, age, job status or education level.

Let leader Lois Schulz (loisschulz1942@gmail.com) know of your interest by June 22.

LUNCH ON THE 6th

Our next Lunch on the 6th is on **Tuesday, July 6, at 11:30 at the Vintage Brewery at 674 S. Whitney Way.** Join your Friendship Force friends for Dining on the 6th at the Brewery's comfortable outdoor patio.



Vintage offers "casual options for house beers, sodas and American tavern eats served in retro digs with visible vats." The menu offers appetizers, flatbreads, soups, salads, burgers, sandwiches and wraps, and a nice selection of entrees. Prices range from about \$9 to \$15. Please make your reservation by **Monday, July 5**, with Gail Holmes, gholmes@wisc.edu, phone 608 249-1846.

On June 6 many happy members met **IN PERSON** at the home of Larry Neuman and Diane Mertens and the home of Sandi and George Wysock. They enjoyed each other's company in good weather and in "normal" environments that we may remember from pre-COVID days!



PROGRAMS

As most pandemic restrictions have been lifted by federal and local authorities, many of our favorite summer experiences are back, to be enjoyed in person. The Programs Committee reminds you of upcoming opportunities to socialize with your FF friends during July.

CONCERTS ON THE SQUARE

The Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's summer tradition is to give live performances on the Capitol Square. July concert dates are Wednesdays July 7, 14, 21, and 28.

The concerts used to be free, open to the public, and they looked like huge summer picnics for friends and family. The format has changed due to the pandemic, and in person attendance is no longer free. Also, the number of attendees is now limited. Ticket prices vary between \$10 (individual seats), and \$50 for a "blanket pod" for 6 people. Tickets are going fast, so if you plan to get out there with your friends, self-organize your visit, and buy your tickets as soon as possible! Gates open at 5:30 p.m. and the concerts begin at 7:00 p.m.

If you can't get a ticket in time, each concert will be live streamed for free.

You can find additional information at the following link:
<https://wcoconcerts.org/concerts-tickets/concerts-on-the-square>

OPERA IN THE PARK



Opera in the Park

Another summer tradition and a FREE open-air cultural experience is Madison Opera's annual Opera in the Park event. So all you music-lovers grab your FF friends to get out for a picnic under the stars!

The concert is Saturday, July 24, 2021, at 8:00 p.m.
(Rain date: Sunday, July 25 at 8:00 p.m.) in Garner Park,
333 S. Rosa Rd., Madison

For detailed information follow the link below:
<https://www.madisonopera.org/oitp21/>

PROGRAMS

MEMORIAL UNION TERRACE

Have you heard? Our beloved Union Terrace is open again! Why not gather a few friends to enjoy a lunch or dinner on those iconic, colorful chairs, and watch the sailboats passing by on the lake, or view a beautiful sunset? While it is a stretch to call this a "cultural experience", it will certainly strengthen our friendships by building shared memories. We encourage our members to organize their own small group and have some fun together!

Open daily 8 a.m. - 11 p.m.

No reservations required, and seating is first-come, first-served. You will need a Union Member card to buy beer.

TRIVIA NIGHT



The next Trivia Night will be July 22 from 4:30 pm to 6 pm.

To register for the event, please contact Mike Lambert at: lambertmichaelj@gmail.com

KNOW YOUR MEMBERS

JANET LONERGAN: A VETERAN FF WISCONSIN MEMBER



Janet and her husband Ralph joined Friend Force-Wisconsin in 1986 when they moved from Palatine, Illinois, to Lake Wisconsin. Their neighbors, offering a steak dinner as a bribe, encouraged them to join the organization.

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KNOW YOUR MEMBERS

JANET LONERGAN: A VETERAN FF WISCONSIN MEMBER

Their first Friendship Force Exchange was a particularly memorable mission trip to Czechoslovakia. Ralph's grandparents were from Czechoslovakia, and their villages not far from Prague where his grandparents had lived. The taxi driver they hired spoke a little English. This kind, helpful driver took them to meet the village administrator. When the administrator, who did not speak English, learned that Ralph had been a teacher, he contacted the local school. A teacher who spoke fluent English was released from his classes and became their guide for the day. He took Janet and Ralph to the town cemetery, church, and a business which may have been owned by Ralph's family. They also saw the site where Ralph's grandmother lived. Although the house was no longer there, Ralph took a piece of wood from the site as a souvenir.

Janet and Ralph were active participants in many Friendship Force exchanges. They travelled to Kenya, Egypt, Chile, Israel, Indonesia, China, and Japan. They also participated in an International Friend Force Conference held in Thailand. After Ralph's passing in 2004, Janet continued to travel with the club. She and her sister participated in an exchange to Poland in late 2004.

Not only did Janet and Ralph travel frequently with the club, but they also hosted many visitors. Janet spoke fondly of hosting two teenage sisters from the Netherlands. Although the young women's parents were part of that exchange, they wanted their daughters to stay with a different host family. Janet and Ralph had a wonderful time showing the teens around Lake Wisconsin and taking them to Great America.

Janet and Ralph held several leadership positions in the Wisconsin Club. Ralph was the exchange director for a trip to Kenya, and Janet was the director for a trip to Chile. In addition, Janet served as treasurer for many exchanges, was editor of the monthly newsletter for 20 years, and was club historian.

Janet recently celebrated her 90th birthday. She has witnessed many changes in the Friendship Force-Wisconsin organization and recalls when the Club organized weekend trips and when all Club members actively planned exchanges. Everyone interviewed perspective travelers and assisted in making detailed preparations for hosting and for traveling. She is grateful that the current board of directors encourages a high degree of member involvement by planning restaurant outings, Zoom events, hiking excursions, bike rides, and service projects. Janet hopes that the Club will find ways to recruit younger members. Bribing perspective members with steak dinners might be just the trick!

UPDATES

FFI OFFERS YOU A PERSONAL FFI WEBSITE ACCOUNT

Get Your Own Friendship Force International Portal Account and Win! Get even *more* involved with Friendship Force

Friendship Force International (FFI), is now providing you a portal into travel and educational opportunities! See below for all the reasons to join.

Also, if that's not enough, we are raffling off a \$25 gift card to a randomly drawn member who creates an FFI user account from now until August 25th.

To create your own personal account on Friendship Force International's website, you need to

1. Set up your account and then
2. Click on the associated email confirmation link from FFI

Set Up Your Account

1. Go to <https://my.friendshipforce.org>
2. Enter in your email address
3. Create a password to use when accessing your new Friendship Force International account
Your password should meet the following requirements:
 - a. Contain at least 6 characters
 - b. Contain at least one uppercase letter
 - c. Contain at least one lowercase letter
 - d. Contain at least one number

Click on the FFI associated email confirmation link

Once approved as a member of Friendship Force Wisconsin-Madison, a confirmation email will be sent to your email address.

Be sure to check your spam or trash folders if you don't see it in your inbox.

Why join?

- In the next month or so, this will be THE site for FFI members to get FFI information that pertains to members only. The existing FFI website will be modified substantially and focus on providing information to prospective members and the public in general.
- This account will provide a mechanism for members to connect directly with other FFI members and clubs around the world.

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UPDATES

FFI OFFERS YOU A PERSONAL FFI WEBSITE

- This will be the source of member information for a myriad of FFI programs, such as classes, virtual experiences, journeys, etc. Members will use this site to register for those programs via secure transactions in the account.
- This account will provide access to members only resources, including chapter training and resource materials. Those resources will be migrated from the current FFI website when that site is updated.

Additional Help

If you would like any assistance in setting up your account, just let Peter know by emailing PKaufman@GMail.Com.

BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION

Standing Committee Chairs

Membership: Lise R. Skofronick 608-274-7732

liskofronick@gmail.com

Journey Manager: Stephanie Sorensen 608-819-6646

ssorensen268@gmail.com

Activities: Gail Holmes 608-249-1846 glholmes@wisc.edu

Outreach: Dorothy Baldwin 608-742-6493 janddbaldwin@gmail.com

Communications: Sandi Wysock 608-833-5326 sandrawysock@msn.com

Program :

Mike Lambert (608)-577-1057

lambertmichaelj@gmail.com

Magdi Sebestyen (608)-213-5768

magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS & ACTIVITY LEADERS

Activities Committee Members:

Gail Holmes (chair) (glholmes@wisc.edu),

Audrey Liimatainen (AMCL822@yahoo.com),

Lois Schulz (loisschulz1942@gmail.com)

Leaders for specific activities are:

Adopt-A-Highway–Stephanie Vanden Bush (sljacobs2@gmail.com)

Bike Rides – Jan Hornback (jhornback@wisc.edu)

Book Club – Reta Haring (retaharring@charter.net) and Marian Ehrenberg (marianeh2014@gmail.com)

International Institutes–Helen Ann Rugowski (haharrin@hotmail.com)

Let's Eat Out (LEO)–Bobbie Vrooman (bobbiesque@gmail.com)

Dining on the 6th – Gail Holmes (glholmes@wisc.edu)

Let's Hike/Let's Walk–Magdi Sebestyen (magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com)

Winter Snow-Shoeing/Cross-Country Skiing--Tamas Gaal (tgaal@wisc.edu)

Second Harvest Food Bank–Lois Schulz (loisschulz1942@gmail.com)

Travel/Day trips–Donna Hussin (djhussin@yahoo.com)



LET'S GET TOGETHER AGAIN

You are invited by Friendship Force of Wisconsin-Madison to attend our

ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC ON WEDNESDAY JULY 28, 2021

Tenney Park Shelter, John Wall Family Pavilion at 300 N. Thornton Ave., Madison

5:30 pm Social Time : 6 pm Picnic Buffet

\$15.00 per person

Directions: From Sherman Avenue across from the lock, turn onto North Thornton Avenue which runs parallel with the Yahara River. Drive to the parking area at the end of the road. Follow the sidewalk to the shelter.

Menu: Grilled hamburgers and brats with buns and condiments, potato salad, creamy broccoli and cauliflower salad, vegetable platter, baked beans, chips, and fruit tray. Picnic catered by Stoddard's Meat Market & Catering. Please bring your own beverage. Park rules prohibit glass containers.

To complete our meal donations of desserts are appreciated. Please indicate your dessert below.

Your reservation and payment are due no later than Monday, July 26, 2021.

Questions? Phone Gail at 608 249-1846 or email gjholmes@wisc.edu

Please wear your name tag!

Friendship Force Annual Summer Picnic

attending _____ x \$15.00 = \$ _____

I need a ride _____ I can provide a ride _____

I will bring this dessert: _____

Name(s): _____ Email Address: _____

Make check payable to: Friendship Force of Wisconsin-Madison

Mail to: Gail Holmes, 3457 Hargrove Street, Madison, WI 53714

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