



friendship force
WISCONSIN - MADISON

ffwis.org



MARCH 2022

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the past few years, we made friends with several young Ukrainians who we hosted in our homes through the Open World program. These young people impressed us with their passion for their country, for their heritage, for democracy. On February 25, as I write this message, Ukraine is besieged by war. My heart aches for them. They are in our hearts and minds today.

I also remember fondly the friends we made from Russia that we hosted through another Open World program focused on media literacy. I was struck by the reaction of one of the Russian delegates to our discussion of US policies and laws related to freedom of information and freedom of expression in our country. That concept was so foreign to the group that one of them said, "I feel that I have landed on another planet."

We are already seeing the war of misinformation that is being waged in parallel with the current invasion of Ukraine. And we are starkly reminded of the fragility of democracy, and our common desire for peace in our world. We send our love and prayers for the safety of our friends and for peace in the region.

While Friendship Force is not a political organization, our mission in Friendship Force – to promote peace through friendship – is as important as ever. I so value the many friendships we have made around the world. As Thich Nhat Hanh has said, a better world begins with each of us "being peace."

Kathy Speck



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monthly Board Meeting:

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

March 5: Let's Walk / Let's Hike. "Activities"

March 23: Presentation on German Culture. "Program Committee"

March 24: Second Harvest Food Bank. "Activities"

April 25: Book Club. "Activities"

Please check our 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!

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



JOURNEYS

REPORT ON THE UNKNOWN

So far this year we do not have firm journey commitments coming or going either abroad or in the U.S. but we don't give up easily!!! We will of course keep you informed about journey opportunities.

Our friends in Toronto are hoping to see us perhaps in 2023 – they don't give up easily either!

OPEN WORLD

KAZAKHSTAN OPEN WORLD PROGRAM

Good News!! Due to the great effort of Sandi Wysock, we have been notified that our application for an Open World Program has been accepted!

We would host a group of five delegates and their facilitator from Kazakhstan from October 28 - November 5. Our obligation is to home host and prepare 30 hours of professional programming around the topic of Emergency Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management. We envision arranging opportunities for delegates to meet with Federal, State and local organizations around this topic.

If you are interested in being part of the committee for this exciting program, hosting or leading our efforts or if you have contacts that would help the committee, please contact Sandi Wysock. It should be a fascinating topic and a great opportunity to meet delegates actively involved in emergency management. Sandi Wysock: 608-833-5326 / sandrawysock@msn.com

ACTIVITIES

AFGHAN REFUGEE SUPPORT

Your Refugee Support Committee continues to work with Open Doors for Refugees (ODFR) to identify current volunteer needs and coordinate FF volunteers. We know individual members can choose to do any form of volunteering, but in this case, it is more effective and efficient for Open Doors to work with volunteer coordinators from other groups rather than take time to respond to hundreds of individual offers to help.

Our President, Kathy Speck, facilitated more in-depth contact with Open Doors in late February and the Committee will meet virtually with the Open Doors Volunteer Coordinator this month to review the scope of what volunteer support FF can offer to Open Doors.

ACTIVITIES

AFGHAN REFUGEE SUPPORT

To that end, the Refugee Support Committee asks each of you to please think seriously about what type of activity you are able to offer and commit to for a period of time.

Please contact Dorothy Baldwin, our Committee Chair as soon as you can to let her know:

- How frequently you will be able to volunteer.
- Your availability (days, nights, weekends, etc.).
- Number of hours you can give each time you volunteer.
- Type of activity including but not limited to:
 - o driving family members to appointments or shopping, school, etc.
 - o sorting /organizing donations in kind.
 - o setting up apartments with items donated or purchased.
 - o mentoring for job preparedness.
 - o small business mentoring.
 - o technology support.
- Are you willing to have a background check performed before you have personal contact with refugee families?

Please direct any questions to:

Dorothy Baldwin: janddbalwin@gmail.com

BOOK CLUB



The next meeting is Monday, April 25 at 7:00 pm on Zoom. The book will be "The Beekeeper of Aleppo" by Christy Lefteri. It is a compassionate story of a refugee couple's journey from their home in war torn Syria to find their cousin who had become a beekeeper in England. Several books are available in the Dane County library system.

Email Marian Ehrenberg at: marianeh2014@gmail.com by February 24 for the Zoom key.

ACTIVITIES

ART AND MUSIC ON THE 6TH

On February 6th, Maureen Kind provided a wonderful experience of the Chazen Museum. Members enjoyed an afternoon out and about, and greatly appreciated Maureen's selection of works to discuss and were impressed by her depth and breadth of knowledge about the museum and its collections.



LET'S WALK / LET'S HIKE

LAST CALL!



Our March hike will be the *Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Freeze For Food* event on March 5th. This event coordinates with our FF initiative to help Refugees as a fundraiser for Open Doors for Refugees. The event is a 5K or 10K run/walk starting and finishing at the Vilas Park Shelter. (5K at 12pm and 10K at 1pm). The 5K walk goes out and back along Lake Wingra.

Never too late to join at:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/WI/Madison/RPCVFreezeForFood>

ACTIVITIES

SECOND HARVEST FOODBANK

Thursday March 24 from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm is our Club's March volunteer day with Second Harvest Food Bank, 2802 Dairy Drive in Madison. This is a safe working environment with precautions in place.

Please consider giving three hours of your time this month to help others, Let Lois Schulz know by Tuesday noon, March 22d if you want to participate. loisschulz1942@gmail.com / 608-243-9761

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

On March 23 the Program Committee will offer members a 1 hour ZOOM presentation by Patricia Haberkorn, a German graduate student from the UW International Reach Cross-Cultural Speakers Program. Patricia will talk about her native German culture and her experiences here at UW Madison. More details and sign-up information from Program Committee of Mike Lambert and David Blado will follow via email to our members.

BOARD NEWS

NEWSLETTER EDITOR STEPPING DOWN

Agnes Rona has been your Newsletter editor since 2019 and has appreciated your response to her efforts. Covid hit us in 2020 and we have gone through two years of Covid together and we made it! Our monthly publication helped keep us connected when so much of our community felt disconnected and disoriented.

However, in keeping with the philosophy of encouraging and developing broad member involvement in our Club it is time to pass the torch when the new President is elected. The Board invites members to raise their hands and become candidates for the position of editor.

The Newsletter could be on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. The outgoing editor would be available to show the incoming editor the ropes and help with the transition. We also have club members with technical expertise to support publication. The transition would be completed in July or August 2022.

If you are interested and have questions, please contact Agnes Rona:
781-910-1094/ whereowhere5@gmail.com

BOARD ELECTIONS

Board elections are coming up in April and your Board has approved the following slate of candidates:

President: Doug Johnson



Doug and his wife, Kathy, have been members of Friendship Force for about 15 years. They have traveled with FF once to Guadeloupe, and have been Journey Coordinators twice, for Indonesia and Medicine Hat. They have home-hosted six times including once for Open World as well as being day hosts and home-hosting dinners several times.

Doug & Kathy, graduates of Augsburg College in Minneapolis, moved to Madison as newlyweds in 1967. Doug became the first physics teacher at newly opened Memorial HS; Kathy began teaching at Orchard Ridge Elementary School. They have two grown children and three grandchildren and enjoy being retired and busy.

Doug has been active in science education having served the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers (WSST) as convention chairman twice and as president. He has also served on two committees for the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA), has made several presentations at national conventions, and continues on the manuscript review panel for the NSTA journal. He has led summer workshops for elementary and secondary science teachers in several states and has been a reviewer and a contributing author for three textbooks. He recently received the highest award from WSST for Lifetime Achievement.

Doug and Kathy both work at polling places on election days; Doug as a Chief Inspector. We both work for the school district as proctors for Advanced Placement exams. We also have both been active in our church, in the League of Women Voters and as volunteer ushers at Overture Center where Doug is also a tour guide.

BOARD ELECTIONS

Co-Vice Presidents: Larry Neuman and Diane Mertens



Diane and Larry are retired educators. Diane taught English at Edgewood High School, and Larry taught sociology and Asian Studies courses at UW-Whitewater. During their teaching careers, both organized and led multiple student tours overseas.

In 1994-95, Diane and Larry lived and taught in Sendai, Japan, and they have returned to Japan many times for personal and professional reasons. Many of their trips to Asian countries were with groups of educators and funded by government and university grants. In addition to visiting most of the countries in Pacific Asia, they traveled extensively in Europe and visited several Latin American and African countries.

Favorite experiences when traveling include visiting schools and businesses, savoring local foods and culture, and meeting families. They have hosted international visitors in their home on several occasions. Diane and Larry enjoy biking and have taken bike trips in the U.S., Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, and Croatia. They helped organize the inbound FF-W bike journey in September 2021. Diane and Larry were delighted to discover FF and join others who share their love of experiencing other cultures, connecting with people across the globe, and seeking ways to advance world peace.

Secretary: John Witte



John is Professor Emeritus in the UW Madison Department of Political Science and has a joint appointment with the LaFollette School of Public Affairs.

BOARD ELECTIONS

Treasurer: Mary Juckem



I became a member in Nov 2017 and had my first exchange experiences in 2018 as day host for the Indonesia and Niagara journeys and as an ambassador to Japan. I was elected treasurer in April

2018. Prior to retirement, I worked as a social worker in health care settings and for 12 years I was treasurer for the rural township in which I resided. I am a volunteer usher for performing arts venues, the library, and the children's museum. I am looking forward to more involvement with Madison's Friendship Force chapter.

BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION

Standing Committee Chairs

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

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

Journey Manager: Stephanie Sorensen 608-819-6646
ssorensen268@gmail.com

Membership: Lise R. Skofronick 608-274-7732
liskofronick@gmail.com

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

Programs:
Mike Lambert (608)-577-1057
lambertmichaelj@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)

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

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

International Institutes – Sandi Wysock
sandrawysock@msn.com

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

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

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

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Official Publication of
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