



friendship force
WISCONSIN - MADISON

ffwis.org

October 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We welcome fall to the calendar year and the wrapping up of another year of Friendship Force activity. We will have a membership meeting on the 25th of October and hope many of you will be there. It will be a time to invite possible new members so look around your friends and see if you can invite at least one new person, our club needs more members to continue its wealth of activities.

With a journey to Turkey concluding and an incoming journey this month, we have been very busy. We hope to hear from our returning Turkey folks and also get to know each other a little more.

So join us Sunday October 25th at 1:30 pm at the Fitchburg Library to celebrate all we have done and what we hope to do in the future.

Kathy Johnson, President



Wisconsin State Capitol – Madison, WI Club Activities Calendar



**BOARD meets VIRTUALLY
on the second Thursday of
the month at 4:00 PM**

2026

October 6	Dining on the 6 th
October 11	Adopt a Highway
October 13-20	Lower Columbia (Washington State) Inbound Journey
October 25	Fall Membership Meeting
October 28	Second Harvest
November 18	Second Harvest

2027 Journey Assignment

May	Inbound Birmingham, AL USA
August	Outbound Yogyakarta and Bogor, Indonesia
September	Outbound New Hampshire Seacoast, USA

Explore • Understand • Serve®

FRIENDSHIP FORCE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FFI 2026 Training Schedule

These workshops are designed for both new and experienced members who want to deepen their understanding of programs, roles and tools.

All times are Eastern Time Zone.

October

- New Member Orientation-October 5, 7:30 PM
- Recruiting New Members-October 22, 7:00 PM
- General Club & Journey Q&A-October 15, 4:30 PM
- Independent Journeys-October 13, 5:00 PM

November

- New Member Orientation-November 11, 1:00 PM
- Travel Insurance Q&A-November 17, 1:00 PM

December

- New Member Orientation-*Date TBD*

An overview of all 2026 workshops, registration links, and available recordings, can be found on FFI's website:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1hu86Sm-EcWzjXQQY6Rne5WbFsVcbA7CctfWHHeSy-Og/edit?_kx=4j7SMbWBjpbKMw6djTVJ1vEQC1LM0m8Ncr39pMtYnM.RaH2Qb&gid=1356194104#gid=13561click94104 (Control + click to follow link)

After careful review of various locations in Europe, Friendship Force International has chosen Porto, Portugal to celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Between late August and mid-September 2027 is the time frame being looked at for the Celebration. Once hotel selections are finalized the confirmed dates will be announced.



Let's Eat Portuguese!

Cafes double as lunch places and are usually cheaper than bars. When a menu is written on a paper tablecloth it is an indication you are in for a treat of a quick home-cooked meal.

Portuguese cuisine is heavy on fish, meats, olive oil and spices. Porto is famous for its tripe, (*tripas a moda do Porto*) a thick stew of tripe, chicken, beans, and vegetables. Another beloved Porto dish is the *francesinha* sandwich stuffed with pork, sausages, and cheese, grilled, topped with more melted cheese and often a fried egg, drenched with spicy sauces.

Other dishes to try: *Frango assado* – roast chicken served with piri-piri hot sauce; *Caldo verde* – “green” soup of kale and potato puree; *Bifana* – pork sandwich; *Petiscos* -Portuguese-style tapas—cured meats, cheeses, olives; *Pastel de nata* -custard tart—a national favorite and *Super Bock* –favorite local beer.

Appetizers found on the table aren't free. In Portugal it is a way to curb your hunger while waiting for your main dish to arrive. Lunch is served between 12:30 and 14:00 while supper is from about 19:30 to 21:30.

Bon Appétit!.

Journey to Seferihisar, Türkiye

We can't wait to hear about the adventures, friendships, and unforgettable experiences of our Madison Ambassadors during their recent journey to the Friendship Force club in Seferihisar, Türkiye, followed by their post-homestay travels across this fascinating country. We look forward to the stories they bring home—the people they met, the places they discovered, and the memories they created along the way. Welcome back!



Left to right: Muttilip, Tayfun and Tahire (Seferihisar), Maureen K., Dorothy B. (Madison), Hatice C. (Seferihisar), Larisa S.(Chicago), Rudy and Chris Michalek (Suncoast Florida), Margaret H and Audrey L (Madison), Hatice T, Hilme and Tulin (Seferihisar).

Ephesus, an [ancient Greek](#) city on the coast of [Ionia](#), In [İzmir Province](#), [Turkey](#). built in 10th century BC.



Front row left to right: Clarine F (Milwaukee), Audrey L (Madison), Suzanne C (California), Diane I (Milwaukee), Micheline L(Quebec), Dorothy B (Madison), Chris M (Suncoast Florida).
Second row left to right: Margaret H (Madison), Rudy M (Suncoast Florida), Marjorie S (Maine), Maureen K (Madison), Dave N (Milwaukee). Back row left to right: Hatice (Seferihisar), David B (Madison), Hilmi and Inci (Seferihisar)

JOURNEY NEWS

A Big Thanks!

A big thank-you to Vicki and Ken Warren, who have volunteered to serve as Journey Coordinators for our 2027 inbound journey from Birmingham, USA. Vicki and Ken know firsthand what a Friendship Force journey to Birmingham can mean; they served as Journey Coordinators when our club visited Birmingham in October 2025.

Now it's our turn to return the fine Southern hospitality we experienced in Birmingham! Vicki and Ken will be looking for members to join the planning committee and help create a memorable Madison experience for the Birmingham Ambassadors.



Don't wait for Vicki and Ken to call you; call them and volunteer! Whether you can take on a planning role, help with an activity, or share your time and enthusiasm, there's a place for you. Let's welcome our Birmingham friends to Madison with the same spirit of friendship and hospitality they shared with us.

2027 Outbound Journeys: Two Great Adventures Await!

Our club has been assigned two exciting outbound journeys for 2027, giving Madison members the opportunity to experience new places, meet new friends, and build lasting connections through Friendship Force.

Indonesia: Yogyakarta and Bogor

Our international journey will take us to two Friendship Force clubs in Indonesia—Yogyakarta and Bogor, both located on the island of Java.

Yogyakarta is a major center of Indonesian culture and history, known for its rich traditions and historic sites. Bogor, about 30 miles south of Jakarta, is known for its contributions to science, education, tourism, and cultural heritage, including connections to Indonesia's Dutch colonial past.



One member has already stepped forward to serve as a Journey Coordinator. We need one more member to join as co-coordinator to help plan the journey and recruit our Madison Ambassadors.

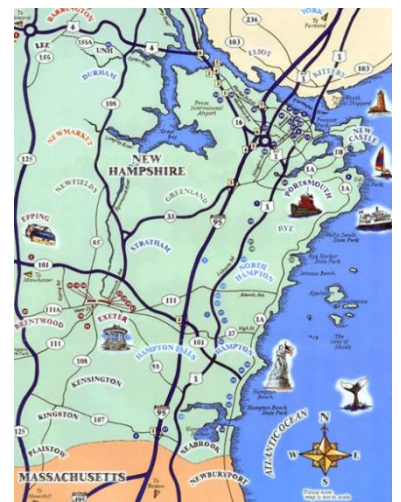
New Hampshire Seacoast

Our domestic journey will take us to the New Hampshire Seacoast Friendship Force Club, located near the Atlantic coast, about an hour north of Boston and Salem, Massachusetts. The area offers easy access to Concord, New Hampshire's capital, as well as the scenic and rugged Maine coastline.

Again, one member has volunteered to serve as a Journey Coordinator, and we need one more member to step forward and co-lead this journey.

Being a Journey Coordinator is a great way to become more involved in Friendship Force, work with other members, and help create an experience that brings people together.

Interested in exploring Indonesia, the New Hampshire Seacoast, or both? To learn more or volunteer to serve as a Journey Coordinator, contact Journey Managers Kathy (kspeckemeny@gmail.com | 608-577-4885) or Tom (tfmillerphoto@sbcglobal.net | 608-334-3327).



JOURNEY NEWS

Welcome, Lower Columbia Washington!



In just a little over a week, eight Ambassadors from the Lower Columbia Washington Friendship Force Club will arrive in Madison for a week of friendship, discovery, and fun. Please join us in welcoming Judi, Oksana, La Verne, Neil, Jane, JoAnn, Leonard, and Gina!

Their Madison hosts will be Pat Watson, Deb Gunter and Matt Gazo, Vicki and Ken Warren, Mary Crave, Katie Hook, Kathy Speck and Gabor Kemeny, and Donna and Tom Miller. A big thank-you to all our hosts for opening their homes and sharing their lives with our new friends.

During their visit, our Ambassadors, hosts, and other club members will showcase what makes Madison and Wisconsin special. There will be cows and cheese, farmers' markets and the State Capitol, art and history, science and nature, and, of course, cranes! But perhaps the most important part of their visit will be the opportunity to meet the people who make Madison such a welcoming and vibrant community.

This is what Friendship Force is all about: opening our homes, sharing our communities, discovering new perspectives, and turning strangers into friends. May our guests from Lower Columbia return home with wonderful memories of our city and our club!

For questions about the journey, contact Tom Miller at tfmillerphoto@sbcglobal.net or 608-334-3327, or Donna Miller at miller1950@sbcglobal.net or 608-609-2617.

ACTIVITIES

Adopt a Highway

Sunday, October 11, 2026, 2:00-4:00 PM

Thank you to Donna and Tom Miller for joining our September AAH clean up. Our work has been paying off – we only had 4 bags of trash to collect this time. Please join us for our final clean up Sunday Oct. 11, 2-4pm. (Meet at the corner of Tower Drive and Highway 51, just east of Stoughton) I hope to see you there! RSVP to Stephanie Vanden Bush at sljacobs2@gmail.com or 920-676-1441.



Tom M, Donna M, Stephanie V

Book Club

Monday, October 12, 2026

7:00 pm

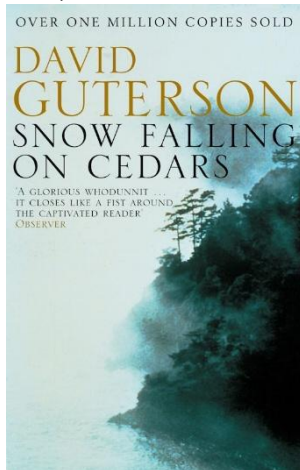
Sequoia Library Study Room 105

ACTIVITIES



On Monday, September 14, five book club regulars enjoyed a discussion of *Custodians of Wonder* by Eliot Stein. The book is a study of ten individuals engaged in maintaining some particular traditional arts, most of significant cultural importance to their community, and all at risk of being altered in our modern world, or even completely lost in the near future. We did not all agree in our appreciation of the writing, but there is no denying the delight in discovering some long-standing and fascinating traditions in such far-flung and ancient societies. Visiting corners of West Africa, Sweden, Peru, Sardinia, India, Taiwan, England, Cuba, Japan, and Germany, one cannot help but be amazed at the wonders of our world. We hope that the UW students who participate with this book in the Go Big Read program this fall will be inspired to travel and create!

Next, we will read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson (1994) 345 pp.



“A ‘finely wrought, flawlessly written’ novel (New York Times Book Review), set on a small island in the Puget Sound, that is ‘at various moments a courtroom drama, an interracial love story, and a war chronicle’ (San Francisco Chronicle). ‘Guterson has fashioned something haunting and true’ (Pico Iyer, Time). Winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award.”

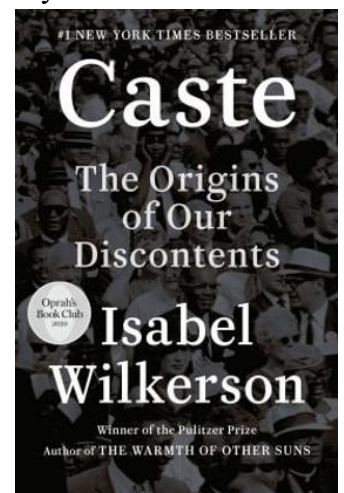
Our meeting for this discussion will take place on Monday, October 12 at 7:00 pm, in Sequoya Library study room 105. We hope to see many of you there.

Looking ahead, we will return to a non-fiction book for the November meeting., *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson (2020) 476 pp.

“Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Isabel Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King, Jr., baseball's Satchel Paige, a single father and his toddler son, Wilkerson herself, and many others--she shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. Finally, she points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.”

May fall bring you many cozy opportunities to read!

Marjie Marion (midsi@aol.com) and Marian Ehrenberg (marianeh2014@gmail.com)



How do members request a copy to read at their leisure of The Othr Side of the Mountain: Bridging the Great Divide by Charlene Terrell (1997 @gmail.com,

Contact the Membership Committee Chair, Lise Skofronick, liserkofronick@gmail.com *The loan period is 30 days.*

ACTIVITIES

Dining on the 6th
Tuesday, October 6, 2026
11:30 AM for Lunch

Taigu Noodles Restaurant
5372 Old Middleton Road, Madison, WI

About Taigu--Some of the most delicious dishes from China are unknown to those who have never traveled there. We aim to change that by introducing some new tastes to Madison from both the Shanxi region of northern China and the Canton region of southern China. If you're willing to be a little adventurous, then we guarantee that your taste buds will be rewarded.



Taigu has an extensive lunch menu with appetizers of dumplings and rolls, soups and fried rice, stir-fried fresh homemade noodles or rice noodles, which are gluten free. There are also dandan noodles, "cat ear" noodles, and spicy scallion noodles. A dozen and a half Lunch Entrees are featured for \$15 to \$18. Available meats are chicken, beef, pork, and shrimp plus a wide variety of vegetables.

Beverages are canned soda, hot tea, or black iced tea. Meals are large generous servings, but, if you have room or want to take one home, there are desserts of sweet sesame balls, almond cookies, fried mini buns, and cake roll for \$4 to \$5. You can view their lunch menu at <https://www.taigunoodles.com/menu-1>. We will be able to order individually from the menu.

Taigu Noodles is a clean and tidy restaurant located across from the Oakcrest Tavern and near the intersection of Whitney Way and Old Middleton Road.

Please register by Sunday, October 4, with host Gail Holmes, phone 608 249-1846 or email glholmes@wisc.edu. Looking forward to another enjoyable experience for our taste buds to enjoy. As always, please wear your name tag.S



Crab Rangoon



Scallion Pancakes



Cashew Chicken



Sweet Sesame Balls

ACTIVITIES



2802 Dairy Dr, Madison, WI
Wednesday, October 28, 2026
12:30-3:30 pm

September was Hunger Action month. Our club responded by volunteering at Second Harvest on September 30. Thanks to Deb Gunther, Matt Gazo, Gail Holmes and Donna Hussin for representing us.

Second Harvest of southwest Wisconsin supports 293 partners and programs. Our club is committed to provide 5 volunteers for each of these dates for the rest of the year. We always work an afternoon shift from 12:30-3:30 PM.

October 28 — Looking for volunteers

November 18 — We already have 5 volunteers signed up

December 30 — Close out your 2026 by helping others

Let Mary Crave know if you can help. Mary.crave@wisc.edu



Left to Right: Matt Gazo, Diane Mertens and Grand Nephew Lucas, Deb Gunther, Gail Holmes, Mary Crave and Larry Neuman
August Volunteers

WITH DEEPEST *Sympathy*



Paul E Buckalew
October 8, 1933 – September 1, 2026

Paul Buckalew passed away on September 1, 2026 at All Saints Memory Care.

Paul was a member of Friendship Force from 1999 to 2017. For those that knew him, he was very inspirational, participating in many of the club events and traveling the world with us. He made many friends by participating in journeys both inbound and outbound. He was the Journey Coordinator for Brazil in 2001.

Services were held on September 8, 2026, at 11 a.m. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church 2121 Rowley Avenue, Madison. Visitation at church was from 10:00 until 10:45 a.m.

Memorial donations may be made in Paul's name to Agrace, 5395 E. Cheryl Parkway, Madison, WI 53711 or at [Agrace.org/donate](https://www.agrace.org/donate) or to Madison Public Schools Foundation-Support Madison Schools Madison Public Schools Foundation.

For more information about Paul, please read the obituary via the following link.

<https://www.cressfuneralservice.com/obituaries/paul-buckalew>

JUST A LITTLE
Reminder

Remember to check 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!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Presidents & FFI Liasons

Kathy Johnson (608) 238-1785

kjohnson44@ameritech.net

Co-Vice Presidents

Mary Crave (608) 575-9847

mcrave@gmail.com

Tom Miller (608) 334-3327

tfmillerphoto@sbcglobal.net

Secretary

Vicki Warren (608) 617-2213

kenvicl@gmail.com

Treasurer

Deb Gunther (262) 422-0176

debgunther@gmail.com

ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

Journey Managers

Kathy Speck Kemeny (608) 577-4885

kspeckemeny@gmail.com

Tom Miller (608) 334-3327

tfmillerphoto@sbcglobal.net

Members at Large

Dorothy Baldwin (608) 742-6493

janddbaldwin@gmail.com

Audrey Liimatainen (608) 558-2295

AMCL822@yahoo.com

Newsletter/Historian

Donna Hussin (608-770-0980)

djhussin@yahoo.com

Past Co-Presidents

Diane Mertens (608) 271-8657

mertensdk27@gmail.com

Larry Neuman (608) 271-8657

wlneuman@yahoo.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Activities

Gail Holmes (608) 249-1846

Electric-Communications

Sandi Wysock (608) 833-

5326 sandrawysock@msn.com

Membership

Lise Skofronick ((608) 274-7732)

liserskofronick@gmail.com

Outreach

(Contact a Board Member)

Program

Contact a Board Member)

ACTIVITIES LEADERS

Gail Holmes, Chair glholmes@wisc.edu

Adopt-A-Highway

Stephanie Vanden Bush sljacobs2@gmail.com

Bike Rides

Vivian Norton vjoan@icloud.com

Larry Neuman wlneuman@yahoo.com

Book Club

Marian Ehrenberg marianeh2014@gmail.com

Marjie Marion midsi@aol.com

Dining on the 6th

Gail Holmes glholmes@wisc.edu

Let's Walk/Let's Hike

Maureen Kind dmkind@sbcglobal.net

Second Harvest Foodbank

Mary Crave (608) 575-9847

mcrave@gmail.com

WISCONSIN FRIENDSHIP FORCE

Official Publication of

The Friendship Force of Wisconsin-Madison

5809 Julia St

Madison, WI 53705

www.ffwis.org

Email Accounts:

ffwis.general@gmail.com

ffwis.meeting@gmail.com

ffwis.outreach@gmail.com

ffwis.membership@gmail.com