friendship force
WISCONSIN-MADISON

ffwis.org November 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a busy month with a journey from Washington state and our membership meeting and our ambassadors from Turkey returning to the US. I hope you had a chance to be a part of these activies and connected with fellow members of our club.

My husband and I will be traveling in November from the 4th to the 13th and not checking emails for that time. We will be meeting up with longtime friends from Virginia Beach who used to live In Madison We have traveled together more than 30 times through the years. We are our own Friendship Force!

As we start the holiday seasons in November and December, we can also count our blessings that we live in such a beautiful part of this world and have the time to enjoy it alone or with each other.

Stay well and see you soon.

Kathy





Wisconsin State Capitol – Madison, WI

Club Activities Calendar



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

2026

p6 November 16 Book Club

p7 November 18 Second Harvest

p6 December 21 Book Club

p7 December 30 Second Harvest

2027

p6 January 18 Book Club

p5 July 12-17 Inbound Birmingham, AL USA

p5 August Outbound Yogyakarta and Bogor, Indonesia

p5 September Outbound New Hampshire Seacoast, USA

p2 September 12-16 FFI International Conference, Porto. Portugal

Promoting global understanding across the barriers that separate people

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.

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=4j7SMbWBJipbKMw6djTVJ1vEQC1LM0m8Ncr39pMtYnM.RaH2Qb&gid=1356194104#gid=13561click94104 (Control + click to follow link)



The dates for the 50th Anniversary Celebration are set. Join your fellow Friendship Force members from around the world in Porto, Portugal from **September 12-16, 2027**. Here's how the week comes together for planning your travel:

Sunday, September 12	Arrival for Leadership Summit participants
Monday, September 13	Full-day Leadership Summit Arrival day for all other celebrated guests
Tuesday thru Thursday September 14-16	50th Anniversary Celebration
Friday, September 17	Departure (morning)

Look for reservation information including costs and pre or post travel opportunities in mid-January directly from FFI.

JOURNEY NEWS

From Cows and Cheese to Cranes: Lower Columbia Visits Madison



Left to right: Mary Crave (Madison host), Pat Watson (Madison host), Leonard Workman (Ambassador), Jane Rosi-Pattison (Ambassador and Lower Columbia Journey Coordinator), JoAnn Workman (Ambassador), Judi Smith (Ambassador), Oksana Tikhonova (Ambassador), Donna Miller (Journey Coordinator Madison), Neil Zimmerman (Ambassador), La Verne Zimmerman (Ambassador), Vicki Warren (Madison host)

From October 13–20, 2026 Friendship Force of Wisconsin-Madison welcomed seven ambassadors from Friendship Force of Lower Columbia, Washington for a week of friendship, discovery, and Wisconsin hospitality. Tom and Donna Miller served as journey coordinators, helping bring together the many details that made the journey possible.

Our guests experienced a little bit of everything that makes Madison and the surrounding area special. The itinerary included visits to the Wisconsin State Capitol, Monona Terrace, the Governor's Residence, and Olbrich Botanical Gardens' GLEAM exhibition. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, ambassadors heard about Wisconsin's dairy heritage at the Dairy Cattle Center and Babcock Hall, home of the university's famous ice

From Cows and Cheese to Cranes: Lower Columbia Visits Madison cont.

cream. Other stops included the UW Geology Museum and the International Crane Foundation, where Peg, the volunteer guide, helped us understand why habitat preservation matters to the survival of the vulnerable crane population.

The week offered plenty of opportunities to compare our two regions. The Columbia River, forests, and Pacific Northwest landscape shape the Lower Columbia area, while Madison is known for its lakes, university, state government, and agricultural heritage. We also shared our interest in Indigenous history, local traditions, and the natural world.

Perhaps the most memorable part of the journey was how these varied experiences brought people together. Whether the conversation turned to cows and cheese, farmers' markets and the State Capitol, or science, nature, and cranes, each activity offered a chance to share stories and learn something new about one another. These everyday conversations are often where Friendship Force's real magic happens.

The attractions were only part of the experience. Home hosts welcomed ambassadors into their daily lives, day hosts shared their knowledge of the area, and dinner hosts created opportunities for good food and conversation. The Welcome dinner with Madison and Lower Columbia trivia, along with game night, added more opportunities to connect. The personal connections made around kitchen tables, during outings, and over shared meals are what turn a visit into an exchange of friendship.

A journey like this takes the efforts of many people. We thank our home hosts, Kate, Kathy, Gabor, Mary, Pat, Deb, Matt, Vicki, and Ken, the day hosts, dinner hosts, and planning committee (Vivian, Mike, Lola, Faith, and Hank), for their time, generosity, and enthusiasm. Each helped demonstrate Friendship Force's commitment to people-to-people connection and building understanding across communities.

As our Lower Columbia guests returned to Washington, we hope they took home fond memories of Madison, a better understanding of Wisconsin, and new friendships that will continue long after the journey. We look forward to the day when our paths cross again. The places we visit may be interesting, but the people we meet make a Friendship Force journey truly memorable.



Olbrich Botanical Gardens



Black Crowned Crane

JOURNEY NEWS

Birmingham, AL Inbound Journey Set for July 2027



Friendship Force of Wisconsin-Madison will welcome ambassadors from Birmingham, Alabama, July 12–17, 2027. Journey Coordinators Vicki and Ken Warren are forming a committee to plan and coordinate the visit.

The journey will offer an opportunity to share the people, places, and experiences that make Madison and Wisconsin special while building friendships across communities. Planning will include activities that introduce our guests to our area's local culture, history, and everyday life.

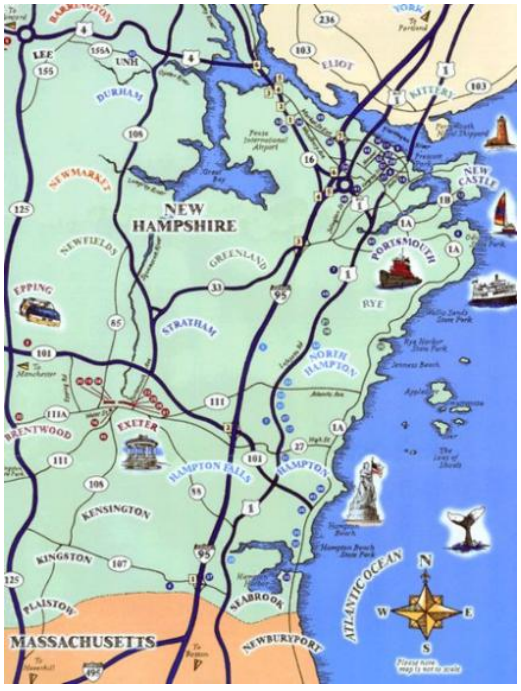
Members interested in helping with planning, hosting, or activities are encouraged to get involved. We need home, day, and dinner hosts. Please contact Vicki or Ken to volunteer. A successful journey depends on our members' participation and hospitality!

Where Will Outbound Journeys Take You in 2027?

To the New Hampshire Seacoast, Indonesia, or both? Two exciting outbound journey opportunities are on the horizon! Watch for announcements inviting members to apply for these adventures. Travel dates are still being finalized, so stay tuned for details.

Want to do more than travel? Both journeys need an additional volunteer to serve as co-Journey Coordinator. It's a great opportunity to help shape a memorable experience, collaborate with fellow members, and build friendships along the way. There is also a financial incentive for serving as Journey Coordinator.

Whether you're dreaming of joining a journey or want to help make one happen, now is a great time to get involved! For more information, contact Tom Miller or Kathy Speck.



New Hampshire Seacoast



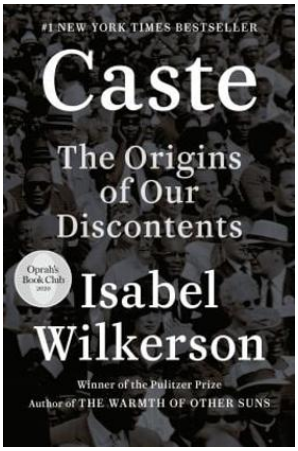
Yogyakarta and Bogor Indonesia



Book Club

Monday, November 16. 2026
7:00 pm
Sequoya Library Study Room 104

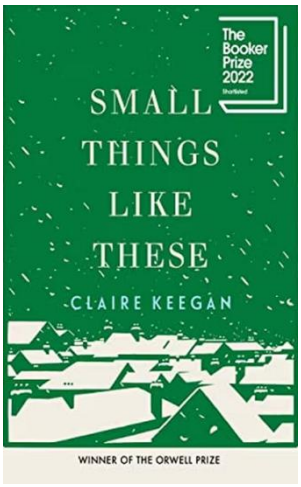
On Monday, October 12, four of us discussed David Guterson's 1994 novel *Snow Falling on Cedars*, and we were unanimous in expressing our satisfaction with the book. It tells an engrossing story with fine detail, allowing a wonderful group of characters to emerge into the complicated and formative times of mid-20th America on an island in Puget Sound. A war story, a romance, a story of the immigrant experience, a mystery and a courtroom drama – the book has something for everyone.



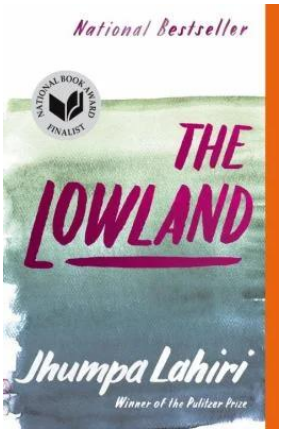
We will next read ***Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*** (2020), 476 pp., by prize-winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson. The library system has 80 copies, with 65 currently available on the shelves.

"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."

Two more books have been selected for December and January. In person or on zoom, to be determined.



Small Things Like These by Claire Keegan (2021) 118 pp. Library has 75 copies; 17 available (with 76 "holds"). Meeting on Monday, **December 21**. A short novel, Christmas time in Ireland.
"It is 1985 in a small Irish town. During the weeks leading up to Christmas, Bill Furlong, a coal merchant and family man faces into his busiest season. Early one morning, while delivering an order to the local convent, Bill makes a discovery which forces him to confront both his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the church. An international bestseller, *Small Things Like These* is a deeply affecting story of hope, quiet heroism, and empathy from one of our most critically lauded and iconic writers."



The Lowland by Jhumpa Lahiri (2013) 340 pp. Library has 29 copies, all marked "available" at this time.

Meeting on **January 18**. A longer novel from an Indian writer, well known for her short stories.

"From the Pulitzer Prize-winning, best-selling author of *The Namesake* comes an extraordinary… novel, set in both India and America, that expands the scope and range of one of our most dazzling storytellers: a tale of two brothers bound by tragedy, a fiercely brilliant woman haunted by her past, a country torn by revolution, and a love that lasts long past death."

Enjoy fall! Enjoy reading! Write or call us with any questions.

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

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

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

ACTIVITIES

Dining on the 6th

Friday, November 6, 2026
9:30 a.m. For breakfast



C's Restaurant, Bakery, and Coffee Shop
2550 Allen Boulevard, Middleton. WI

Good reviews from members recommend that we try breakfast at C's Restaurant, Bakery and Coffee Shop. C's is located on Allen Boulevard at the intersection with Century Avenue.

They have all the typical menu selections of eggs, omelets, benedicts, skillets, french toast, homemade pancakes, and waffles from the griddle. Of course, there is toast, muffins, biscuits, oatmeal, homemade hash browns, sausage, bacon, ham and steak. There are a fair number of Breakfast Specialties to choose from as well.

Hoping you will join us for good conversation and friendship. Please register by **Wednesday, November 4**, with host Gail Holmes, phone 608 249-1846 or email glholmes@wisc.edu. As always, please wear your name tag.

Hope to see you there!

SECOND HARVEST FOODBANK OF SOUTHERN WISCONSIN
A member of FEEDING AMERICA

2802 Dairy Dr, Madison, WI
Wednesday, November 18
12:30-3:30 pm

Second Harvest of southwest Wisconsin supports 293 partners and programs. Our club is committed to providing 5 volunteers. At our October volunteer Donna Miller, Gail Holmes and I repackage rice. We close out 2026 by helping on December 30.

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

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!

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