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CALENDAR

Feb 1, 12 noon - MEG - The Pink House Café, Independence (see below)

Feb 19, 2 pm - general meeting - location TBA - an email announcement with details will be sent

World
Wetlands Day
2 February 2023
It's time for wetland restoration



World Wetlands Day is annually held on February 2 to celebrate how wetlands, which are lands saturated by water, help maintain biodiversity on Earth. See page 5 for additional detail.

MEG (Meet, Eat and Greet) Meeting Wednesday, February 1, 2023 - 12:00 noon Pink House Cafe, 242 D Street, Independence

Meet, eat, and greet (MEG) is open to all. It allows time for old members to reconnect, and new members to become part of the group. Friends are always welcome to join us. No formal club business is conducted but ideas generation is common. These lunches are held throughout the mid-Willamette Valley on a semi-regular basis. Gail Wolcott and Carolyn Powers will be 2023 organizers. If you know you will attend this meeting for sure, please RSVP to either Gail or Carolyn so that they can work with the restaurant on group seating. That said, if you later learn you can come but didn't RSVP, just come and join us. Likewise if you have RSVPed and plans change, no worries. Life is change. We are flexible!



*This Issue of Connections, and more information about our club,
can be found on our website: <http://www.fforegon.org>
Contact us at: fforegon@comcast.net or PO Box 1703, Albany, Oregon 97321*

President's Message - Sharon Harr

Hello FFOMWV Members!

With regret, I apologize for missing the January meeting and enjoying being with all of you to start off 2023 together. My introduction to vertigo was unexpected and humbling. Now I am getting back on track and excited and looking forward to all of us determining our direction for our club and shaping ideas of what that will look like. The discussion of alternating general meetings with social gatherings, I think, is a great starting place. I'm also finding that reading the newsletters of other FF clubs to be inspiring. I'm in for the ride, how about you?

In Friendship - Sharon

Let's Go See Our Friends in Winnipeg and Edmonton!

Fast approaching is our 2023 outbound international journey to Canada. June 17-29 are the dates. Applications are being accepted until February 19 and must be turned in to Mary Ellen Lind complete with a photo of yourself and check for the \$25 application fee. We have space for 16 travelers. This will be a wonderful opportunity to travel internationally, but relatively close to home.

Each of the two clubs we will be visiting have websites. They are: friendshipforcedmonton.org and friendshipforcewinnipeg.org. I don't know about you, but I want to try their poutine and find out just what makes Canadians known for being so nice. Questions? Give Mary Ellen Lind or Chris Duval a call. O, Canada!

Holiday Dinner - Kastella

Ten club members participated in a Jan 29 "potato bar" dinner at Chris Kastella's house in Philomath. Participants brought potato toppings, beverages, dessert, and donations for the local food bank. In addition to potatoes, Chris served a wonderful apple pie. With both newer and long-time club members present, we had a delightful conversation about things we might do differently in our outreach and "in reach" efforts in the club. These ideas will be shared and pondered by our board.



January 22 General Meeting

Our first general meeting of the new year was held on Sunday, January 22 at Painters' Hall, the community center for the Pringle Creek Community in Salem. Lisa and Jonathan Schachter, who live in Pringle Creek, were our hosts. Past club officers were thanked, new officers for 2023 were elected and installed (see page 9 for listing), journey plans for the current year were reviewed, and our wish list for international travel in 2024 was decided - Belgium and several locations in Japan. Jonathan Schachter gave the group a short overview of Pringle Creek and conducted a walking tour after the meeting. The Pringle Creek Community is built on the northern tip of the original Fairview Training Center property, where for nearly 100 years, the State of Oregon ran a school for people with developmental delays. When the State closed the school, "A group of forward-thinking Salem residents, developers, planners, and businesspeople, [Sustainable Fairview Associates] saw an opportunity to collaborate on a new model for sustainable development at Fairview... When logistical challenges slowed the ability to develop the whole site immediately (~272 acres) ... a separate company that includes some of the original members, purchased the 32 acres and began building Pringle Creek Community as the first concrete expression of their vision for the overall Fairview site. The master plan envisioned a community with a diversity of housing types, land uses, and residents, structured in a way that respects and enhances the natural features of the site." – Craig Beebe, 1000 Friends of Oregon.

As usual, snacks were provided after the meeting. Russ and Marla Karow had just returned from Thailand and brought fried bamboo caterpillars to share. Many people tried at least one. To learn more about the role of insects as a future world food source, click [here](#) to read a FAO publication on entomophagy.



Pres Murphy leads meeting



2022 officers thanked



Chris Duval gives journey updates



2023 officers installed



Insects may be in your food future

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING JOURNEYS (Revised January 2023)

2023

May 18-25	INBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Inbound from Leuven, Belgium to be combined with their visit to Sacramento, California; Host JC's: Marilyn Peterson and Kathy Butler
June 17-29	OUTBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Outbound to Winnipeg, Manitoba then Edmonton, Alberta Canada. Manitoba, #20151, Susan Finlay; Edmonton, # 23152 , Sharon Schnell; JCs: Mary Ellen Lind and Chris Duval.
End of July or early August	INBOUND DOMESTIC: Inbound Denver, Colorado (Ilene Americus) #20403 to be combined with their visit to San Francisco, California; JC's need to be confirmed by board: Dennis Murphy and Ted Powell
October 2-6	FFI World Conference: Dubrovnik, Croatia, with pre- and post-excursions
Early November	OUTBOUND DOMESTIC: 4-day Mini-journey to Sacramento

2024

June TBD	INBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Inbound from Tokyo, Japan #22501 Host JCs: Marilyn Peterson and Eileen Minette
Not Scheduled Yet	INBOUND DOMESTIC: Inbound from Charlotte, North Carolina, (Tommie Craig) #21116.
Not Scheduled Yet	INBOUND DOMESTIC: 4 day Mini-Journey from Sacramento



Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep - state animal of Colorado



Holiday Dinner - Peterson & Butler

Marilyn Peterson and Kathy Butler hosted a New Year's Brunch on Jan 6. A good time was had by all. The menu included Mimosas (cranberry and orange), sausage strata, orange scones, green salad with raspberries and rainbow sorbet with Scottish shortbread. Art and Marilyn Bervin, past members of our club who are still engaged on occasion, are standing at back.



Edla Johnsons Memories of Friendship

After that first trip to Russia in May 1992, we were convinced that we needed a Friendship Force club in the Willamette Valley. That became a reality in September 1992.

The family I stayed with in Moscow, was, I suppose, typical. Husband and wife, daughter and husband and a 6-month-old baby all living in a same small apartment. Certainly not a family that can afford a round trip ticket to the U.S. However, Tamara (the wife) won a ticket to come to the United States in the fall of the same year. I received a letter from her telling of her good fortune. It was translated for me about a month after I received it.

I arrived home after a 2-week trip to Israel on a Sunday in early December with jet lag and very tired with all the usual Christmas preparations ahead of me.

That morning, early, I received a phone call from the Friendship Force, Atlanta office, asking if I could host Tamara. I wasn't expecting her to be able to come to the West coast. I said, "Yes, when do I expect her?" SATURDAY! She'd be here for 2 weeks! In December? Before Christmas? Impossible!! How could I accomplish everything I HAD to do before Christmas?? Well, I didn't!! Instead we enjoyed and shared an American Christmas with Tamara. Never have I enjoyed, shared, loved and appreciated the meaning of Christmas more. I dispensed with all the usual Christmas cards and sent them in January instead. Time was more relaxing and I could share Tamara's visit.

We visited at Nancy Berg's tree farm where Tamara would choose, cut and wrap the tree to bring home. Plus, she insisted on trimming the tree. She touched and rode a horse for the first time in her life when she visited with Gloria in her country home. She saw with eyes of amazement the biggest red apple at a table at Adella Wood's home. The car radio antenna fascinated her and the music was *fantasia* for her. She was overwhelmed by the warmth and friendliness and generosity of a gift of a patchwork quilt given to her by the church quilters. Her view of a fully supplied grocery store was unbelievable to her. And to me? Amazing what we take for granted! She saw the Pacific Ocean and yelled across the water, "Helloooo Russia!" She won at playing cards, when we couldn't explain the game since we don't speak Russian, we showed her examples of the card hand instead.

A rushed Christmas?? NO!! A more simplified Christmas. A Christmas with more understanding and sharing of love and meaning. The meaning of Friendship Force, lasting friendships. Faces not places. A time I will always remember. A time that always brings tears of memories and fulfillment when I tell the story. A Christmas to remember.

Merry Christmas in friendship, Edla

A Moment in FFOMWV History Snippet from Dec 1999 - Jan 2000 Newsletter

Edla is still active in our club!



About World Wetlands Day

Wetlands are found near the sea or inland and can be seasonal – they are water logged only during parts of the year, or perennial. They play a crucial role in the ecosystem by:

- Preventing flooding by absorbing water
- Ensuring that the soil provides a unique breeding ground for vegetation that feeds fish
- Giving shelter to animals
- Purifying water by removing sediment

World Wetlands Day has been observed since February 2, 1997. The day commemorates the anniversary of the signing of the Ramsar Convention in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971. The convention is a treaty on the preservation and sustainable use of wetlands.

<https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/world/world-wetlands-day>



Photo by Adobe Stock/Dudarev Mikhail

FFI Virtual Experiences

With actual journeys now taking place, FFI's virtual offerings are fewer. FFI is offering club and language training opportunities. To see a current listing, visit this website in your FFI portal - <https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/>

FFI BOOK CLUB: FFI BOOK CLUB

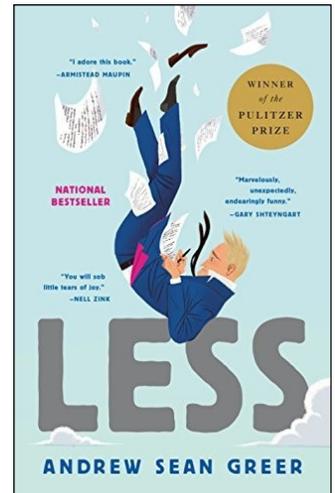
"Less"

by Andrew Sean Greer

Tuesday, February 28, 2023, 11 am

Host: Kerstin Hogan, FFI Staff

In our February meeting, we will discuss this hilarious Pulitzer Prize-winning novel full of "arresting lyricism and beauty" (The New York Times Book Review). It is a scintillating satire of the American abroad, a rumination on time and the human heart, a bittersweet romance of chances lost, by an author The New York Times has hailed as "inspired", "lyrical", "elegiac", "ingenious" as well as "too sappy by half". Register [here](#).



FFI Virtual Experience Recordings can be found at the bottom of the FFI member portal website listed above.



Discover Vietnam Tour and Homestay

Host: Vietnam-USA Society (VUS), Hanoi, Vietnam

This event was organized by our longstanding partner, the [Vietnam-USA Society \(VUS\)](#), based in Hanoi, Vietnam. In addition to learning about Vietnamese culture, you can find out more about next year's Special Journey "Discover Vietnam Tour & Homestay" (April 5 - 16, 2023). Please [click on this link](#) to view the presentation slides. Check out the proposed itinerary [by clicking on this link](#).



Quest for Japan

Hosts: Chizuru Marion (FF Dayton), Kikumi Shiga (FF Oita), Aki Takahasi (FF Tokyo)

In this event, you are introduced to FF Dayton's Journey plan for 2023. Which destinations were chosen and what can first-time visitors see, observe and experience? You also learn about some characteristics of Japan - geography, history, environment, lifestyle and the people and much more.



Friendraiser Kick-Off Message

Jeremi Snook, CEO, and Dana Jackson, VP of Fund Development, share an overview of what to expect from the 2022 Friendraiser event where members will receive packaged information to help them rebuild their clubs after the pandemic.

Board Meetings

The next FFOMWV Board meeting will be on Wednesday, February 8 at 1 pm. All members are welcomed to participate. If interested, send Marilyn Peterson an email and she will send you the ZOOM link.



Zoom board meeting screen shot

FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF OREGON'S MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY

BOARD MINUTES DECEMBER 14, 2022

Present: Dennis Murphy, Current President and Treasurer-elect; Sharon Harr, President-elect; Van Nichols, Current Treasurer; Jim and Rosie Brabeck, Vice presidents-elect; Chris Kastella, Secretary-elect; Mary Ellen Lind, Secretary.

Due to no quorum of elected officers, legal business did not take place.

Minutes of November 9 and 20 were not approved. Dennis described the changes in the financial report due to the process of changing records to the Quick Books software. For the sake of new board members Van explained the difference between the Journey and General accounts.

The Journey Coordinator applications for the Manitoba/Edmonton Canada and the Leuven, Belgium were not approved.

Journey Planning updates:

2024 inbound hosting availability form. Dennis had sent to the board the completed form that was submitted to the FFI. No discussion.

Mary Ellen Lind reported on plans to journey to Manitoba, Quebec then Edmonton, Ontario in June, 2023. She stated they can host around 16 ambassadors, which is the same number that signed up from our group with interest in the journey. More information and applications will be provided early in the new year.

No report available on the incoming Leuven, Belgium journey

Dennis reported he and Ted Powell are the JC's for incoming Denver. The journey may occur in late July, 2023.

No report available for JC's to Sacramento journey.

The written report from our regional rep, Tom Best, which was emailed was reviewed. According to his notes the local and national annual membership dues will be assessed separately.

Van reported that the Small Group dinners are underway, 4 in December and 3 more in January. Changed dates will be communicated via weekly email.

Newsletter articles are to be submitted to Russ Karow by December 25.

The January club meeting will be on January 22 at the Pringle Creek Painters Hall Community Center in Salem where the Schachter's are members. Reminder of who is responsible for snacks will be sent via email.

Dennis suggested the board give thought to forming a membership committee that could include recruitment, vetting and orientation of new members plus existing member activities such as, Meet, Eat, Get Acquainted activity and Sunshine Committee.

Submitted by Mary Ellen Lind, Secretary

Membership Application or Renewal for 2023

Annual dues cover the cost of the monthly newsletter and expenses for activities of the Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley, as well as membership in Friendship Force International. Memberships expire on December 31, 2023.

Annual Dues Rate for 2023 is \$40.00 per person (please print clearly). It is not too late to renew your membership or to join our organization.

This is a NEW _____ or a RENEWAL _____ Application

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Dues enclosed: (\$40.00 per person) \$ _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Mail to: Friendship Force, PO Box 1703, Albany, OR 97321



Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let there be peace on earth, And let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth,
The peace that was meant to be.
With friendship as our mission, Family all are we.
Let us walk with each other In perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, Let this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment,
And live each moment, In peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth, And let it begin with me.

Friendship Force Pledge

As a member of the Friendship Force, I recognize that I can make a difference. I recognize that I have a mission. That mission is to be a friend to the people of the world. As I embark upon this adventure, I know that others will be watching me. I know that through my example to my fellow citizens and the people of other nations, the cause of friendship, love and peace can be furthered.
I can make a difference.

Your 2023 Leadership Team

Board Members

President	Sharon Harr
Co Vice-Presidents	Rosie Brabeck Jim Brabeck
Secretary	Chris Kastella
Treasurer	Dennis Murphy
Journey Organizer	Chris Duval
Member At Large	Marilyn Peterson
Newsletter Editor/Archives	Russ Karow

Activity Leads

Friendship Shared	Sue Stein
Internet Communications	Marilyn Peterson
Inventory & Merchandise	Rita Powell
MEG Coordinators	Gail Wollcot Carolyn Powers
Membership	The Brabecks
Navigators	Barb Callner
Sunshine "Committee"	TBD
Welcoming Committee	Rita Powell

Journey Coordinators

May 2023—Inbound from Leuven Belgium - Marilyn Peterson & Kathy Butler

June 2023 - Outbound to Edmonton, Canada - Chris Duval & Mary Ellen Lind

July or Aug 2023 - Inbound Denver, combined with visit to San Francisco - Dennis Murphy & Ted Powell

June 2024 - Inbound from Tokyo - Marilyn Peterson & Eileen Minette

COVID And Our Club

While cases are in the decline, COVID is still with us and is likely to be an on-going concern for some people. COVID is not the flu, and can do serious and sometimes permanent damage to its victims. Members of our FF club are dealing with some of those long lasting effects. The board encourages all of the members of our community to get vaccinated if no other medical conditions prevent or make it dangerous. We encourage you to wear a mask in crowded situations. It is one of the best forms of protection available to all of us. Along with the face masks, washing your hands especially after having been in crowded situations with unknown people. While COVID home tests are not always accurate, especially in the early hours of COVID, please test yourself prior to attending FFOMWV events in the coming months, and please, even if you test negative, but do not feel well in even the slightest way, do not attend. We all need to do our very best to protect ourselves and each other in every way that we can.

