

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 - year end dinners
- 2 - President's message & myFFI
- 3 - Dec 8 board mtg; John & Ruth Wyse
- 4 - Nov 15 virtual journey; coordinators needed
- 5 - next steps on fees from FFI
- 7 - your stories request; Chris Duval journey
- 8 - Duval journey continued
- 9 - Schedule of upcoming FFOMWV journeys
- 10 - FFI virtual journey listing
- 11 - October 13 board meeting minutes
- 12- membership form
- 13 - your 2021 leaders; Petersen Rock Garden?

CALENDAR

- Dec 8, 1 pm - board meeting via Zoom (p 3)
- Dec small group dinners —see article on this page about small group dinners



International Volunteer Day - Dec 5 - p 6

Ugly Sweater Day - Dec 17- p 11



End of Year Holiday Gatherings

As announced earlier, given COVID concerns, we have scheduled small group dinners in December. Our thanks to those who have agreed to host.

- Eileen Minette, Saturday, November 13, 5:00pm
- Ted and Rita Powell, Saturday, December 4, 4:30pm
- Russ and Marla Karow, Saturday, December 11, 5 pm
- John and Ruth Wyse, Tuesday, December 14, arrive at 4pm, eat at 5pm
- Kathy Butler and Marilyn Peterson, Friday, December 17, 5:30pm
- Chris Duval and Van Nichols, Sunday, December 19, 2pm

Happy holidays to all!



Photos from Eileen's November 13th dinner. Others, please take photos for inclusion in our January newsletter!



*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

December, a month of excitement, anticipation, memories, celebrations, music, great food, and quality time with friends and family. We look to the end of this year with happiness and appreciation for all the good things that we have in our lives. We look to the coming year in hopeful anticipation that we will be able to safely visit with our friends and family more frequently. As members of Friendship Force, we are full of anticipation and excitement about the chances to once again travel to new places, form new friendships, and in our own way bring a bit more peace to the world.

Mavi Ramirez, of the FF club in Tuxtla-Gutierrez presented a virtual experience of the Day of the Dead festival in San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas, Mexico on November 23d. A number of the members of our club attended this presentation. It was enjoyable and interesting. It left me with excited thoughts that we will be visiting there the second or third week of May next year. A lot of effort goes into the preparation and presentation of a virtual experience by a club. One of the benefits of these presentations is that they give ambassadors an insight into the culture and the landscape of the places we will be visiting. The presentation is available on the Friendship Force website. Look on page 10 of this newsletter for the website URL. I encourage you to watch this presentation if you plan to journey with us to Costa Rica and Mexico in 2022.

Thank you to all of our members who have opened their homes to the small group dinners this year. The initial responses to the dinners have been very positive. Members have enjoyed the intimate settings, the scrumptious meals, and the great conversations. Thank you especially to Van Nichols and Chris Duval for organizing this event.

May you all have a wonderful month of joy and celebration with your family and friends.

In Friendship,

Dennis



MyFFI

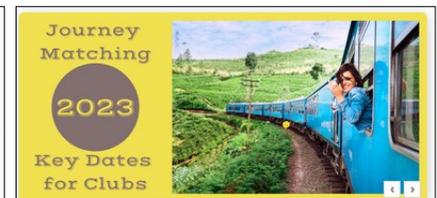
If you have not yet done so, please set up your on-line myFFI account. Every person associated with FFI will need their own account. To sign up, go to your favorite web browser (it is easiest to use a computer versus a phone or tablet/iPad) and type <https://my.friendshipforce.org> into the search bar. Click on the purple "Sign Up" box. Enter your name, club from the select list (Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley) and your email. Two people cannot sign up under a single email. If you routinely share an email with a partner, in this instance, you will need to create a standalone account. This can be easily done by creating an email account within Gmail. Your myFFI membership will show as 'pending' until our club administrators (Dennis or Kathy) certify your membership. You will receive an email through which you can confirm your signup. Look in spam, junk, or promotions if you do not receive an email in your inbox. Marilyn Peterson is available to answer questions about the site, its functionality, future plans or technical difficulties.



The Essence of Friendship Force



Third Quarter Financial Update



December Zoom Board Meeting - December 8 at 1:00pm

Members are always welcome to attend board meetings and to participate in discussions regarding club business. If you would like to attend, please let Marilyn Peterson know. She will send you the Zoom link to the meeting.



Nov 10 Board Zoom screen shot.
Russ - bottom center - was having connection issues that several times made him appear asleep on the job.

About Our Members - John and Ruth Wyse



John and I joined Friendship Force at the urging of someone I knew through our mutual service as members of the board of the Salem organization of the OR Symphony, and it opened a world of great friendship and great travel experiences. An especially wonderful example of this was our trip to Moscow as a part of the Brisbane, Australia exchange. Rita and Ted Powell had maintained contact with the family who had hosted them many years previously, and when they learned we would be joining a trip to Moscow, they emailed this couple and suggested they host us. They were no longer members of Friendship Force but volunteered to meet us at the Moscow train station beforehand (we had been traveling independently through the

Baltic republics) and host us at their dacha for the weekend. What a fantastic experience we had that included a special Russian feast with beverage from the samovar, at the dacha of a nearby friend. This is just a single example of how much our membership in FF has enriched our travel experiences and lives. The contact with local people is truly a highlight of our FF journeys.

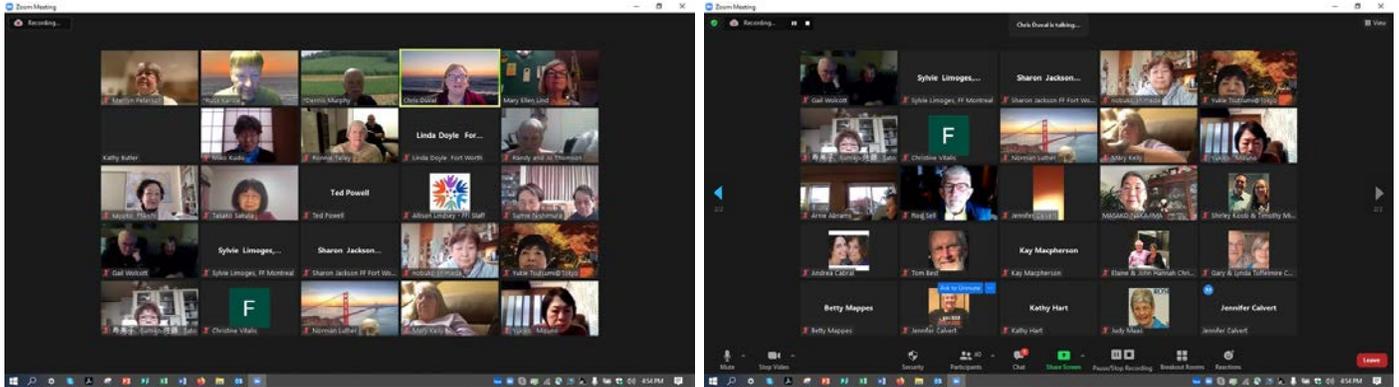
FFOMWV Dues for 2022

It is that time of year where our organization asks our members to pay their organizational dues for the coming year. We operate on a calendar year basis. Dues for 2022 will be \$40 per person. This is \$5 increase over the pre-pandemic dues level of \$35 (we used a discounted rate in 2021). Why the increase? FF International has raised their dues level to \$25, a \$5 increase over the past. Our local dues will remain at \$15. Local funds are used in club management - space rental fees, printing and mailing, web site fees, etc. If you have any questions about our dues, please speak with any board members to gain more information. See page 12 for a current dues submission form and mailing address. Dues payment in December would be appreciated.



November 15 Virtual Journey Report

On November 15, our Friendship Force club hosted a virtual tour of western Oregon. At peak participation, we had 42 screens in the Zoom session. All follow-on comments were extremely positive. Many members from the Tokyo club that will be visiting us sometime in the future participated. If you missed the tour and would like to watch it, go to <https://vimeo.com/646576928>



Co-Journey Coordinators Needed for Oklahoma & Lake Hartwell, Georgia Outbound Journey 2022 - Chris Duval

We plan to travel to Oklahoma and to Lake Hartwell, Georgia in late September or October, 2022. In order to take a contingent of our members to these states, we need to have a set of Co-Journey Coordinators to lead the group. This journey will include a 5 or 6 night stay in each place, with a travel day in between. The co-JCs will need to plan for travel arrangements for the group as well as advertise the journey, gather ambassador applications, approve ambassadors, communicate with the hosts about activities that are planned, and lead the group on the journey.

We have been in communication with both of these host clubs and they are in agreement that all hosts and ambassadors will need to show proof of full vaccination. Domestic journeys are an excellent opportunity to meet other FF members without an overseas flight. It is so much fun to see other areas in the US. Please let Chris Duval know if you are interested in serving as a co-Journey Coordinator for this journey. We must have leadership in place in order to continue planning for this journey.

Thanks for your consideration. Chris Duval.



Next Steps Update From FFI

In late October, Jeremi Snook, FFI CEO and President, sent out an update to all FFI members. It described current organizational state, past year accomplishments, and future fiscal plans for FFI. All of the activities and actions have been the result of long discussions by your FFI board (our own Marilyn Peterson is a member) and concerted effort by the streamlined FFI staff and volunteer assistants. If you missed that email, below is a synopsis.

Before outlining future changes, let us take stock of where FFI is today:

- FFI has survived the worst of the economic impact of the pandemic and has a series of contingency plans to ensure FFI's long-term survival as we emerge from the global pandemic.
- Over the past year, we have successfully launched a broad series of FF Virtual Experiences.
- Development for a new multi-lingual website that focuses on our mission has continued in spite of the pandemic and is set to debut later this year.
- Members can now receive timely, multilingual, communications through my.friendshipforce.org (myFF).
- The FFI Board has approved the first four members of the newly reinvigorated International Advisory Council (IAC). This is part of a larger marketing and communications strategy as we go into 2022 to raise the profile of FFI globally and attract new members.
- We are looking ahead to our first post-pandemic World Conference, currently scheduled for 2023, with locations currently being evaluated.

There really is so much more, but this effectively gives us the highlights.

To continue positioning us for a stronger future, the following changes have been approved by the Board of Directors:

- The annual fee paid by members, either as part of the club charter renewal process or directly to FFI, shall be referred to in all publications as: FFI Membership Dues. (EFFECTIVE 2021).
- The FFI Membership Dues for 2022 shall be set at \$25 USD per annum per member. (EFFECTIVE January 2022)
- The FFI Membership Dues for 2023 shall be set at \$30 USD per annum per member. (EFFECTIVE January 2023)
- The FFI Journey Fee will change from a flat 'per journey' fee to a flat 'per night' fee. The fee will be set at \$25 USD per Journey night regardless of accommodation type, ambassadors' origin, or the Journey destination. There is no distinction between international and domestic travel. (EFFECTIVE January 2022)
- FFI will announce a \$45 voluntary donation from all members between now and early 2022, entitled "\$45 in honor of 45 years of Friendship Force."
- For Special Journeys such as cruises, staff-organized tours, staff-managed/-recruited Journeys, festivals, conferences and other special events, fees will be set by staff to reflect the amount of administration time required.

Marilyn is happy to answer any questions you may have about these actions.



friendship force
INTERNATIONAL

\$45 in honor of 45 years of Friendship Force - Marilyn Peterson

March 1, 2022 - World Friendship Day as recognized by Friendship Force. Can you believe that our organization will celebrate its 45th anniversary next March? That is a real milestone. 45 years of A World of Friends is a World of Peace.

As travel begins to open up, we think of the possibilities of making more friends in 2022. The past months have been difficult, and it appears that there might be some more bumps in the travel road in the future.

How can we help Friendship Force International continue to promote peace through friendship? We can help by making sure that while we are not traveling the organization remains financially strong.

If you have not donated to FFI in the past, now is the time. If you have donated, thank you. 45 years of friendships made and kept. A donation of \$1 for each of those 45 years would make a positive impact on FFI's financial health.

\$45 for 45 years of friendship. What a great way to show our support!

Questions: please contact Marilyn Peterson

To donate you may click on this link: <https://donorbox.org/crossing-the-finish-line>

Thank you for your support.



friendship force
INTERNATIONAL

International Volunteer Day - December 5

International Volunteer Day, also known as the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development, is a United Nations observance celebrated around the world on **December 5**. It is a day for volunteer organizations and their volunteers to have their efforts commemorated and praised, as well as an opportunity to show the work that they do in their communities, on a national and international level, and encourage others to join them. International Volunteer Day was established on December 17, 1985, by the United Nations General Assembly. The aim was to give organizations, foundations, and volunteers an opportunity to show their contributions to local and international communities, and allow volunteers to have their work recognized.

(www.calendarr.com)



Help Us Reveal the History and Impacts of FFOMWV

We need your stories! What or who drew you to join our Mid-Willamette Valley organization? Describe your first journey or hosting experience. What did you expect and what did you learn? What have you enjoyed most as you continue your journey with FFI? We want to hear from you. Send your stories to Russ Karow, newsletter editor.

This newsletter includes musings by Chris Duval about a recent FFI journey to Connecticut. FFI journeys help us on the road to discovery about ourselves!

A JOURNEY WITH FRIENDSHIP FORCE - *Chris Duval*



I traveled to Connecticut in October, 2021 with Friendship Force of Southern Oregon. If you have never traveled with another FF club, talk to me! It is fun and rewarding. The autumn weather was in full Indian summer mode, with cool mornings and shirt-sleeve afternoons. The leaves on the trees were colorful and many had dropped to the ground already. I resisted the urge to pick up some of the bright orange and red leaves and just stepped over them as I passed. No room in my suitcase for a bunch of colorful leaves which would likely be dried up by the time I got home.

Our time for the week-long visit, was filled with visits to museums, trolley rides, attending live theater in historical buildings, seeing the state capital in Hartford, visiting wineries, eating at local diners, and touring the seaport at Mystic, Connecticut. We had such fun seeing all the sights and getting to know fellow FF members on this journey.

Despite all this activity, my hostess and I found time to take nearly daily walks around her neighborhood which looked unlike my own locality in Oregon. All of the homes here were much older and set far back from the street with expansive front lawns neatly trimmed and hedged. Each home was adorned with signs of fall, such as pumpkins lined up on the steep front steps. Most doors were decorated with wreaths in fall colors. Near the edges of the front sidewalks were stacked numbers of large paper bags full of leaves that homeowners had raked up, ready to be picked up by the refuse service.

The homes were stately and large: most with at least two stories, and some with turrets and castle-like roofs on them. Just looking at them made me wonder about how much the property taxes might be on such huge homes. Their garages were mostly around the back down long driveways. By contrast, my own neighborhood in Oregon is full of single story much newer ranch type homes with small front yards and garages visible from the front of the houses.

As my hostess and I walked along, we visited as two new friends might: sharing parts of our lives as we got to know each other. I found out that my hostess appreciated my company on these walks. I told her that I rarely walked at home because I have no one with whom to walk. Oh, if we only lived nearer one another! We spoke of our families, including our grandchildren, and we found that we had much in common. It was cordial and fun to walk and talk each day with this new person in my life.

MY JOURNEY WITH FRIENDSHIP FORCE CLUBS (cont.)

Many of the homes were festooned with Halloween décor. One two story white painted home had 10 foot tall furry, black spiders climbing all over the outside of the home. It was scary looking. How did they get them up there so high? And how were they fastened to the side of the house? Another home had characters from Star Wars lurking all over the front yard. I stopped often to take photos. In my own neighborhood in Oregon, there is not so much Halloween décor displayed.

We walked one day to a local park and enjoyed the late-blooming dahlias which were standing several feet tall. I took many photos of the various brightly colored blooms in purple, yellow, and red. It is no wonder that when I travel, I feel so alive. I tend to stay in the moment much more than when I am at home and preoccupied with my daily life. By the time we got back to my hosts' home each day after our walk, I had accumulated probably 25 photos and at least 5,000 steps without even realizing it. I was amazed at my ability to so easily take the time to walk when I am traveling. At home I find excuses not to do so. Maybe my travel will change my daily life when I return, I thought.

Alas, now that I am home, I have not taken the time to walk through my own neighborhood yet. It was too easy to go back to my usual routine. I haven't taken a photo since I have returned either. Whereas on my trip, I took many photos each day, relishing every single thing I saw that caught my eye.

I truly think I should get up one of these days and declare it a travel day, even though I am not going anywhere. I might rise and dress for the weather and find myself outdoors with my camera, walking and taking photos of whatever catches my fancy. It would be a good practice and would likely show me more about my own life than I currently see each day when I go about life not really looking very closely at things.

Thank you to Friendship Force of Southern Oregon for inviting me on this journey. Thank you to Friendship Force of Connecticut for graciously hosting me for this stay in their state. Thank you to my new friend Rose Anne (and her husband, Dave), for welcoming me into her home, and for walking with me and finding amusement in my taking photos of everything in her neighborhood that she found an everyday experience. I promise that one of these days, I will take a walk with fresh eyes in my own neighborhood.



SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING JOURNEYS (November 2021)

2022	Early May	OUTBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Outbound to Tuxtla Gutierrez and West Alajuela #22729; Ambassador JCs, Juanita Weigel and Kathy Butler
	June 7-13	INBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Inbound from Tokyo, Japan #22501 Host JCs: Marilyn Peterson and Eileen Minette
	July 25-30	INBOUND DOMESTIC: Inbound from Ft. Worth (Linda Doyle) and San Antonio, (Hope Robles) #22513, coordinated with their journey to Southern Oregon club (Amy Lepon); Host JCs: Mary Ellen Lind and Chris Duval
	August 21-28 August 28-Sep 10	Pre-extension to the FFI Festival at Sea - Viking Sagas FFI Festival at Sea – Northern Isles
	Fall of 2022	OUTBOUND DOMESTIC: Outbound to Oklahoma (Rose Schultz), combine with our assigned outbound to Lake Hartwell, Georgia (DeeDee Sabo) – 22764. Note: 5 days each, with a travel day in between. <u>Co-Journey Coordinators needed.</u>
2023	June (tentative)	OUTBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Outbound to Edmonton, Canada, (Brenda Kane), possibly combined with our outbound to Manitoba #20151, (Jean Hyrich) Tentative JCs: Mary Ellen Lind and Chris Duval.
	Tentative	INBOUND DOMESTIC: Inbound Denver, Colorado (Ilene Americus) 20403 to be combined with their visit to San Francisco, California; Host JCs Dennis Murphy and Chris Duval; If possible, try to combine with inbound from Charlotte, North Carolina, (Tommie Craig) #21116.
	September (tentative)	INBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Inbound from North Bay, Ontario, Canada #20326; to be combined with stop in Flathead Valley, Montana and Colorado Springs, Colorado, by North Bay.



The flag of Colorado Springs, Colorado, is white with a blue border on top, bottom, and fly. The flag also has the sun setting behind the mountains. The flag was offered to the Colorado Springs city council in 1912 by Caroline Spencer, representing the Civic League.

FFI Virtual Experiences

See <https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/> for a full listing.



FFI BOOK CLUB: “Out of Istanbul – A journey of discovery along the silk road” by Bernard Ollivier

Wednesday, December 1, 2021, 11 am Pacific
Host: Kerstin Hogan, FFI Staff

The fourth book we are reading together is “Out of Istanbul – A journey of discovery along the silk road” by acclaimed French journalist and writer Bernard Ollivier. Please go to your favorite book store or borrow this book from the library around the corner and start reading now.

[Register here.](#)

Let’s connect with music!

Monday, December 13, 2021, 11 am Pacific

Host: Kerstin Hogan, FFI Staff

Each country has songs through which its culture can be experienced. Music is all around us and many of our clubs perform music pieces when journeying together. We would like to invite all of you to come and sing or play a song, whether it’s a solo performance or together with some other club members. If you prefer listening, that is also fine. Let’s connect with members worldwide through music!

[Register here.](#)



Christmas music festival

Saturday, December 17, 2021, 4 pm Pacific

Host: Japan Music Club

Japanese club members who are ardent music lovers welcome you to a special time playing Christmas songs from around the world. We will perform some of the Christmas favorites, including White Christmas, Waltz Medley, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and others, playing individually or in groups. Please join with us and feel free to just listen, sing along, or share your own live or pre-recorded performance with us. Let us deepen our friendship through music and hopefully meet again someday. [Register here.](#)

Recorded virtual experiences, such as those below, can also be found at the FFI Virtual Experience website <https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/>



Board Meeting Minutes October 13, 2021

Attending: Dennis Murphy, Kathy Butler, Chris Duval, Marilyn Peterson, Russ Karow Caye Poe
Mary Ellen Lind

Previous minutes approved

Treasures report—Van not present, report provided by Dennis

Discussion on dues . FFI raised dues to 25.00 per member for 2022. FFOMWV will charge \$15.
This brings total to \$40.00 per person.

Chris moved and Kathy seconded that dues increase to \$40 be approved 100%

Motion was approved.

Fund raising for 2022 hasn't been announced yet by FFI.

December meeting.

After discussion the board decided to have small group dinners of 6-8 members instead of a large gathering of members. Suggestion was made that since Van had vast experience with small group dinners, to ask him if he would lead. Chris volunteered to assist Van.

Personally some people prefer people who are vaccinated—some members might be okay with unvaccinated. Need further input. Dennis will call Van for his input and put something in the November newsletter.

Journey Report: —Tuxtla Kathy hasn't been able to contact everyone. Hemily a FFI person will help. Costa Rica—expect vaccinations as they are all vaccinated. May—don't know date for sure. June. Tokyo, Japan.. Don't know about Rose Festival yet and dates need to co-ordinate with group scheduled to come. Texas—20 people so far, but still iffy. How many can we host? Thinking that 20 is max. Outbound hopes to happen. Start from scratch with 2023 ideas. Edmonton/Manitoba, North Bay Ontario still don't know what's possible. Outbound to Oklahoma/Georgia is possible but still tentative. In 3 months a lot of this whole story should be resolved.

We need to renew the Website FF Oregon. It expires Dec. 30th. Possible 1-2-5 years. Suggest 2 year \$30.00 5 year would be \$125.00. Motion was made, seconded and approved to go with five year option.

ALEX Program. Department of State has designed a program for 900 students called ALEX. Academic Leadership Experience. Would involve one week in Washington DC followed up by 7- 9 days with possibly FF clubs. Students are 17-19 years old and good English speakers. Dennis has expressed interest in the program and we are waiting for additional details.

Newsletter—Send information to Russ by the end of the month.

National Ugly Sweater Day - December 17

National Ugly Sweater Day, also known as National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day, takes place on the **third Friday of December**. Once an object of ridicule, Ugly Christmas Sweaters have gained popularity and become a cultural phenomenon in recent years. This is a day to whip out your ugliest Christmas sweater - think tinsel applications, bells, tacky designs, and lights - and wear it for the whole day. Maybe even have a competition with friends and family to see who can find the ugliest sweater. (www.calendarr.com)



Membership Application or Renewal for 2022

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, 2022.

Annual Dues Rate for 2022 is \$40.00 per person (please print clearly). Please send form and payment by December 1 if at all possible.

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 2021 Leadership Team

Board Members

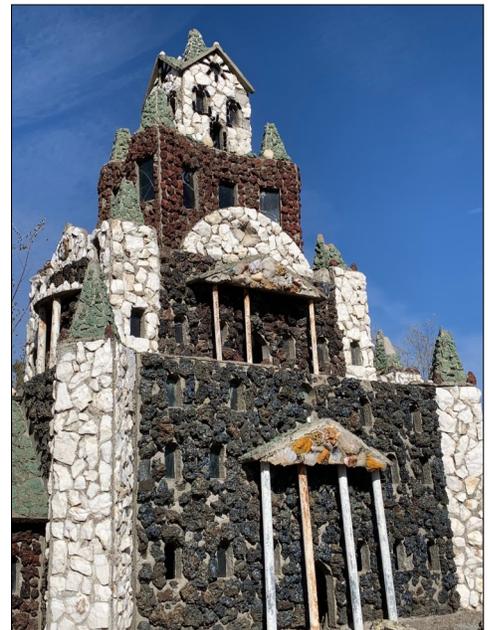
President	Dennis Murphy
Vice-President	Kathy Butler
Secretary	Caye Poe
Treasurer	Van Nichols
Past-President	Juanita Weigel
Journey Coordinator	Chris Duval
Member At Large	Marilyn Peterson
Newsletter Editor/Archives	Russ Karow

Activity Leads

Friendship Shared	Sue Stein
Internet Communications	Marilyn Peterson
Inventory & Merchandise	Rita Powell
MEG	Sharon Harr
Membership	Kathy Butler
Navigators	Barb Callner
Sunshine "Committee"	Sharon Harr

Oregon Trails - Petersen Rock Garden

Have you ever heard of Petersen Rock Garden? It is the folk art vision of one man and a Redmond tourist attraction that has survived far longer than its creator. It's open every day, with a museum and gift shop. Visitors are invited to wander the grounds until sunset. Born in Denmark, Rasmus Christian Petersen (1883-1952) built his rock garden in the last 17 years of his life, in tribute to his adopted new country. He collected rocks, petrified wood, glass, lava, and shells from around Redmond, and began building replica structures at the age of 52. His creativity eventually yielded a scaled-down Statue of Liberty, U.S. Capitol building, an impressive Independence Hall and many other structures. Quirky but a great spot for a quick stop. <https://www.roadsideamerica.com/story/2962>



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