

Friendship Connections

The Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley June 2021

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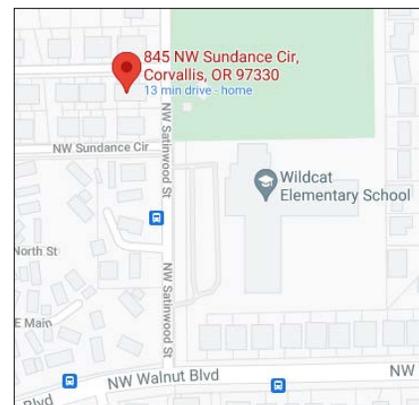
CALENDAR

- June 9 - board meeting, 1 pm Zoom (p 12)
- June 17 - MEG "live" event (p 1)
- No general meeting in June



Meet, Eat and Get Acquainted (MEG) - LIVE June 17

As more Oregonians are being vaccinated and COVID restrictions being reduced, we are all going to have the opportunity to explore our new found freedom in getting together, in person, with others. The first opportunity for such in our Friendship Force club will be a June 17, 10:30 am MEG gathering at the home of Sharon and Peter Harr (845 NW Sundance Cir). Sharon is our MEG coordinator. This will be an outside meeting on the Harr's deck. Masks will be required as you arrive. Once the group has assembled and assessed the physical setup, the group can decide whether all are comfortable in removing masks. Tea and coffee will be provided. Please contact Sharon if you have questions.



*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 - *Dennis Murphy*

Dear Friends,

It is great to be having discussions again about upcoming journeys that are less than a year away. In the spring we plan to visit Mexico and Costa Rica. That journey will be followed by a visit from Friendship Force of Tokyo in early June. There are more details available in this newsletter.

Speaking of journeys, please do not forget to register with the new Friendship Force website for members. www.my.friendshipforce.org Registration with this website will be required if you wish to participate in outbound journeys. If you have any difficulty at all, please do not hesitate to contact a board member for assistance.

There will be no general meeting in the month of June.

FFI has invited our club to create a virtual journey to Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley. We will do this by creating a slide show of pictures of prior FF visits to our favorite places. Members of our work group will then take turns describing the pictures and places along with providing additional information. It is our hope to present this virtual tour at our July general meeting. This will be our practice session before we make the presentation available to all members of FFI members. You may well be receiving a call asking for additional pictures or information that you may have on places we take our ambassadors.

In the coming months, our board will be contacting all of our membership with important survey questions that will help us plan and prepare for meetings and journeys next year. These questions will include asking about your attitudes towards COVID safety and vaccinations and your willingness and abilities to host (overnight host, day host, small dinner host). We need to get a current idea of the number of people our club can handle on inbound journeys.

Our August annual meeting is planned to be at an outdoor park. It will be our first public gathering since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. It is planned for August 8th, a week earlier than our normal time due to some potential scheduling conflicts. Please put the date on your calendar and we do hope you will be willing to gather with us to celebrate our steps toward the return of a pandemic free life.

In Friendship!

Dennis

We Need You to Help - Texas Inbound 2022 - *Chris Duval*

FFI has officially assigned our club to an inbound journey from Ft. Worth and San Antonio, Texas in 2022. A firm date has not been set but we are possibly looking at late July. This journey also will involve a stay with the Southern Oregon club as well.

We need to get Host Coordinators assigned right away so that the journey dates can be set, in cooperation with our Southern Oregon friends. Does this interest you? Typically we have two Host Coordinators working together to set up a program of activities for the approximately 6 day, 5 night stay.

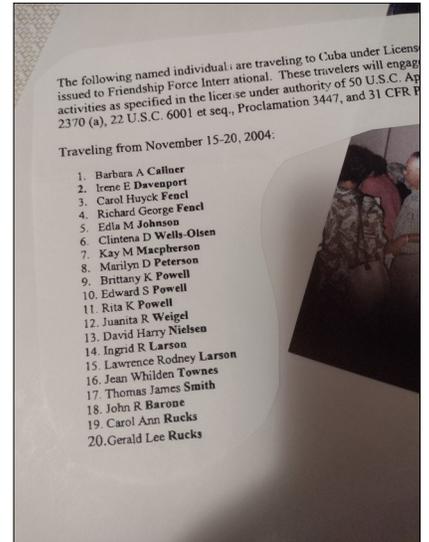
The Board is working on guidelines for hosting a journey, which will help you determine how to go about hosting. Sometimes it is helpful to have an experienced host coordinator pair up with a less experienced host coordinator.

Please talk with Dennis or Chris if you have interest in applying to take on this role. Chris has the application forms. It might seem like this is far in the future, but we need to set dates soon so that planning can begin.

Thanks for your consideration. Chris Duval.

May 16 General Meeting Report

Our May 16 general meeting was held via Zoom. Following a short business meeting, club members who traveled to Cuba 15-22 November 2004 shared memories of that trip. American tourists were not allowed in the country at that time. Tourists from some other countries were allowed. The group traveled as a humanitarian project assemblage, which was allowed. They helped paint and did other renovation work at a Methodist Church affiliated nursing home in Havana. While trip participants recalled flying out of Miami, their official documents did not show this place of departure. Brittaney Powell, Ted and Rita's daughter, celebrated her 21st birthday with the group in Cuba - likely a forever memory. You will recognize some faces, all be they a bit younger looking, in these trip photos. A general conclusion from this meeting was that we need to do more "memory-lane" travel logs, even when we can again meet in person.



REPUBLICA DE CUBA VISA - PERMISO DE ENTRADA				REPUBLICA DE CUBA VISA - PERMISO DE ENTRADA			
281039		281040		281039		281040	
D. I. E.	Lugar de Expedición	Fecha de Expedición	Fecha de Entrada	D. I. E.	Lugar de Expedición	Fecha de Expedición	Fecha de Entrada
DB	UNA	21/10/04	19/01/05	DB	UNA	21/10/04	19/01/05
Tipos y Números		Número de Entradas		Tipos y Números		Número de Entradas	
Marilyn D Peterson		UNA		Kay M Macpherso		UNA	
Fecha de Nacimiento		Ciudadanía		Fecha de Nacimiento		Ciudadanía	
02/10/48		Cub.EE.UU		02/07/43		Cub.EE.UU	
Número Pasaporte		Número Pasaporte		Número Pasaporte		Número Pasaporte	
074476584		074476584		208721110		208721110	
CONSEJO IGLESIAS Autorizado a Permanecer / Authorized to Stay 30D Cuño Firma Autorizada / Authorized Signature 237				CONSEJO IGLESIAS Autorizado a Permanecer / Authorized to Stay 30D Cuño Firma Autorizada / Authorized Signature 237			

A Taste of Western Oregon

As part of the Friendship Force International effort to offer virtual country, regional and city tours (see page X for examples) until live journeys are possible, our club has committed to providing a tour of western Oregon for distribution this fall. The current planning and construction team includes Dennis Murphy, Marilyn Peterson, Chris Duval, Kathy Butler and Mary Ellen Lind. Others with interest are welcomed to participate. Marilyn and Russ will coordinate Power Point construction. Others will contribute tour location and theme ideas, photos and talking points. If interested in assisting in this effort, please contact Dennis. We will share our draft product during the July general club meeting and ask for corrections and additions.



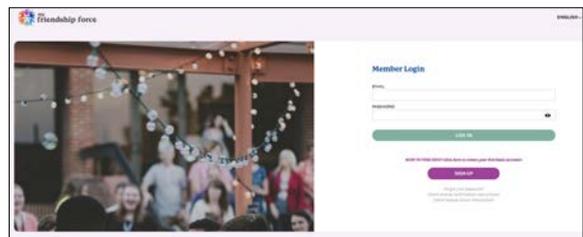
My FFI

As of early May, about 1,500 Friendship Force International (FFI) members, ~10% of our worldwide membership, had signed into the new FFI member portal. About half of our local club members have signed in. Your portal will be unique to you. Every person associated with FFI will need their own portal. Two people cannot share a portal given that each person will have their own member identification number and all the records that you will have with FFI will be associated with your ID number.

How do you set up an account if you do not have one? 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 My FFI 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.

Help from FFI is available at: support@friendshipforce.org Marilyn is also available to answer questions about the site, its functionality, future plans or technical difficulties.



MAY MEG EVENT – WRITING EXERCISE - CHRIS DUVAL

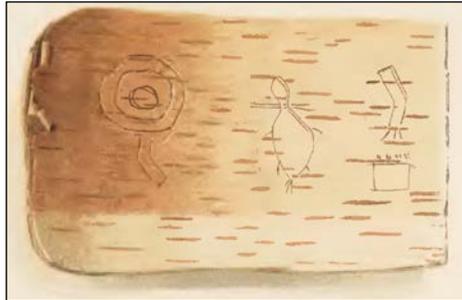
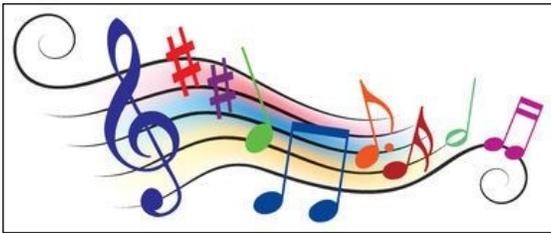


In Sharon's absence, Chris Duval stepped in to host the May MEG get-together via Zoom, on Thursday, May 13, 2021, at 1 pm. There were only a few participants, but we had a great time. We learned that:

All over the world, in every culture, human beings have carved into stone, written on parchment, birch bark, or scraps of paper, and sealed into letters – their words, sometimes as pictures. Those who do not write stories and poems on solid surfaces tell them, sing them, and, in so doing, write them on the air. Creating with words is our continuing passion.

from Writing Alone and With Others by Pat Schneider

We spent a few moments writing our thoughts on travel and friendship. It was fun and interesting. Thanks to those who participated.

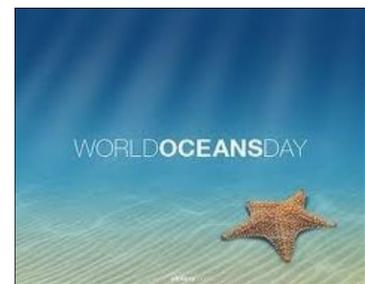


See <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/minnesota/articles/2021-05-22/century-old-sacred-birchbark-scroll-returned-to-ojibwe-tribe> for a bit of birch bark writing history

WORLD OCEANS DAY

World Oceans Day takes place every 8 June. It is an annual observation to honor, help protect, and conserve the world's oceans. The ocean provides us with many resources and services including oxygen, climate regulation, food sources, medicine, and more. The sea is important because it:

- Provides food for people
- Makes oxygen
- Impacts weather everywhere
- Purifies water that runs to the ocean, evaporates and falls as rain
- Provides the basis for a large number of medicines



HOW TO OBSERVE

On social media, use #WorldOceansDay to follow the day.

Do an internet search of photographs to see diverse and beautiful ocean creatures. One place to visit is the [National Geographic](https://www.nationalgeographic.com) website.

Since garbage, biota, and bacteria from local streams end up in the ocean, the next time you go a stream, river, lake or the ocean, clean up after yourself and join a local beach cleanup.

HISTORY

The concept was initially proposed in 1992 by Canada's International Centre for Ocean Development (ICOD) and the Ocean Institute of Canada.

At the first World Oceans Day in 1992, the objectives were to move the oceans from the sidelines to the center of the international discussions and to strengthen the voice of marine and coastal constituencies worldwide.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING JOURNEYS

2021	August 22 – 29 August 29 – Sept 12	Pre-extension to the FFI Festival at Sea - Viking Sagas FFI Festival at Sea – Northern Isles
2022	April/early May	OUTBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Outbound to Tuxtla Gutierrez and West Alajuela #21132 Ambassador JCs, Juanita Weigel and Kathy Butler
	June 7-13	INBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Inbound from Tokyo, Japan #20317 Host JCs: Marilyn Peterson and Eileen Minette
	Late July	INBOUND DOMESTIC: Inbound from Ft. Worth (Linda Doyle) and San Antonio, (Hope Robles) #21342, coordinated with their journey to Southern Oregon club (Amy Lepon); Host Coordinators needed.
	Fall of 2022	OUTBOUND DOMESTIC: Outbound to Oklahoma (Rose Schultz), combine with our assigned outbound to Lake Hartwell, Georgia (DeeDee Sabo) – 21105. Note: 5 days each, with a travel day in between.
2023	June (tentative)	OUTBOUND INTERNATIONAL: Outbound to Edmonton, Canada, (Brenda Kane), hopefully combined with our outbound to Manitoba #20151, (Jean Hyrich)
	No Month Chosen Yet	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.
	Late Sept (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 Host JCs: Chris Duval and Mary Ellen Lind



The Tokyo Tower, officially called "Japan Radio Tower," is a communications and observation tower in the Shiba-koen district of Minato, Tokyo, Japan. At 1092 ft, it is the second-tallest structure in Japan. The structure is an Eiffel Tower-inspired lattice tower that is painted white and international orange to comply with air safety regulations.



Travel Tips – Cash & Cards While Traveling Internationally

Russ Karow and Marilyn Peterson

One of the points to ponder while preparing to travel is how to deal with funds in other countries. These are some thoughts based on our travel over the last couple of years, when such as possible.

Cash

I always feel more comfortable with a bit of cash in hand, but obtaining foreign currency can sometimes be a hassle and expensive. Some banks provide a foreign currency purchase option but may not offer all currencies. Check with your bank on types, minimum purchase amount, fees, and the number of days needed for processing.

If you are a member of the American Automobile Association (AAA), you can purchase currency through your local office. AAA can obtain most currencies. They sometimes will buy back as well. As with the bank, check on minimum purchase amount, current fees and days needed for processing. Typically, three days are needed. AAA may still charge a flat fee for an entire transaction. Check with other travelers and see if they want to be part of a “package deal.” Try to get the foreign currency in as small a denomination as possible.

In a group like Friendship Force, check with other club members to see if they have a small amount of the currency in which you are interested. If not being met at the airport, all you really need is enough money to get from the airport to the place you are staying.

Many airports will have currency exchange booths. Exchange prices at such booths are usually high, but likely not more than you would pay your bank or AAA. There can sometimes be a sliding fee scale for exchange depending on the denomination of the bills you are changing. \$100 bills most often have the lowest exchange cost. I typically carry a couple \$100 when I travel just for this possible use. Make absolutely certain that the bills are as close to perfect as possible – not torn or written on. Obviously not “new” or older bills lacking current counterfeiting protections may be rejected.



When traveling with a group, consider the other members of the group in your decisions about currency exchange. Don't expect the entire group to be able to wait for you to exchange money at the airport or have your hosts take you somewhere to exchange funds. There was a time in Japan when our 'quick trip to the bank' turned into over an hour in the bank while every US bill was inspected. Another possible issue with an exchange booth is that it might not be open when you arrive at the airport, so do not count on this exchange venue.

Another option is to use your debit card to obtain cash at the airport as you enter the country. Many airports will have ATM machines but you cannot always count on there being a machine or that it is operational. See the cautions about card use below.

Travelers checks are no longer a thing!

Travel Tips – Cash & Cards (continued)

Credit and Debit Cards in General

Ours is an electronic world. Most countries will have credit or debit card use options or even a preference for such versus cash. Follow these steps before you leave:

1. Contact your bank and let them know where and when you are travelling *before you leave on your trip*. Your cards are monitored for suspicious or unusual activity and a payment could be denied without such preapproval.
2. Due to significant fraud activity in some areas of the world, transactions may be blocked on debit and credit cards. Verify with your bank that card use is allowed where you are travelling. If not, plan accordingly. At one point, OSU Credit Union cards could not be used in South Korea.
3. Your bank may offer prepaid travel cards. Check on such if this is of interest.
4. Check your cards to make sure they won't expire while you're away.

Debit Card Use

Find out from your bank what the daily cash withdrawal limit is on your card and what the fee will be to withdraw cash from an ATM. There is typically a flat fee for withdrawals, up to \$8 USD in some instances, plus a currency conversion fee. If your card has a high flat fee, you are best off to make withdrawals up to your card limit versus making many small withdrawals. Your cash limit will be in US dollars. You will need to figure out what amount this is in the foreign country currency. Some foreign stores will only accept debit, no credit, cards. Be sure you have enough cash in your bank account to cover possible contingency needs like this while traveling. In a couple of instances, the key pad on an ATM had a different setup than a typical US pad. They were upside down. Be sure you remember your actual PIN number versus the pattern!

Credit Card Use

Credit cards are in common use in most countries. Many carry a foreign transaction fee (FX) of 1-3%, but some do not. Check with your bank so that you know for sure. If you do extensive foreign travel, you may want to obtain a card that does not charge a fee, but compare those possible costs versus the annual fee for the card. You will see the FX added to your credit card billing statement. The OSU Credit Union charges a 1% as shown in below. First Tech Federal CU has a Mastercard that does not charge an annual fee and does not charge an international transaction fee. Their debit card does charge a fee – a percentage of transaction.

02-02	02-03	TOPS-101 THE THIRD PLA 88058147 BANGKOK TH	109.69
	02-03	International Conversion Fees TOPS-101 THE THIRD PLA 88058147 BANGKOK TH	1.10
02-06	02-07	CHEF MAN 61908326 BANGKOK TH	136.17
	02-07	International Conversion Fees CHEF MAN 61908326 BANGKOK TH	1.36
02-12	02-14	ON THE TABLE-WHICHDOM 71006445 BANGKOK TH	37.02
	02-14	International Conversion Fees ON THE TABLE-WHICHDOM 71006445 BANGKOK TH	0.37
02-12	02-14	TOPS-101 THE THIRD PLA 88058211 BANGKOK TH	160.53
	02-14	International Conversion Fees TOPS-101 THE THIRD PLA 88058211 BANGKOK TH	1.61

Travel Tips – Cash & Cards (continued)

A recent urban myth says that Master Card does not work internationally. This is not true. In some places it's better than VISA. Discover and American Express can sometimes be problematic.

Often when you use a credit card, you will be asked if you want to pay the bill in US dollars or the local currency. Choose local currency. In this instance your credit card company does a mass purchase of foreign funds and gets a good exchange rate. If you choose USD when you pay, then the merchant or card processor gets to set the exchange rate which most often will be a worse rate. You may not remember this, but when you received your new credit card, it was mailed with a personal identification number. In very rare instances, I was asked for the PIN for my credit card which, in the first instance of such an ask, I did not have.

We always keep a little extra foreign currency in hand after we travel. You never know when you will again need it or if a friend may be interested in using it. It is also a fun educational tool for neighborhood kids and grandchildren.

Other advice - always carry a copy of your passport picture and info page, visas, all credit and debit cards (both sides so you have the international “ help” phone number) and medical/insurance cards. Make sure the copies are not in the same place as your cards and original documents.

Plan ahead for cash needs while traveling. Add this chore to your travel checklist and you will be well prepared.

Exchange rates today 23 May 2021

[1 MXN to USD](#) = 0.050139 USD
[5 MXN to USD](#) = 0.250695 USD
[10 MXN to USD](#) = 0.501390 USD
[20 MXN to USD](#) = 1.0028 USD
[50 MXN to USD](#) = 2.5070 USD
[100 MXN to USD](#) = 5.0139 USD
[200 MXN to USD](#) = 10.0278 USD
[1000 MXN to USD](#) = 50.1390 USD
[2000 MXN to USD](#) = 100.28 USD

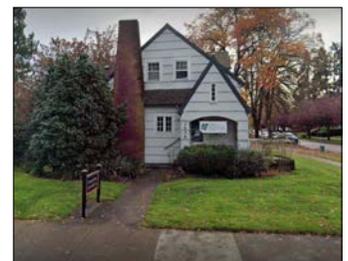
Conversion charts like this are readily available on-line. Consider printing out a chart like this to carry in your wallet/purse for easy reference. This is for Mexican peso to USD. The ball park conversion in this instance is 20 MXN to 1 USD.



Partnership with OSU and Corvallis Multicultural Center

FFOMWV is in partnership with the OSU International Scholars Program. On Saturday, May 15, OSUISP and the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center held a “Drive-Through Block Party Event”. We were invited to participate by providing “items” for the SWAG (Stuff We All Get) bags that were given to the drive-through attendees.

Club members printed flyers on FFI and FFOMWV and attached these to small bags of trail mix - food for body and soul. Kay Macpherson and Marilyn Peterson delivered the items for inclusion.



A FFI Virtual Activities

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



Faces & Places: East Africa **Thursday, June 10, 2021, 10 am Pacific** **Host: Tracy Mirembe, FF Kampala**

Come together for a virtual Journey to East Africa and find out what makes this region so unique. One of our well-travelled members of the FFI International Board of Directors, Tracy Mirembe, will talk about Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania, discussing both the commonalities and differences between these countries. Register [here](#).

Café Virtuel en Français: Les fêtes et festivals autour du monde **Tuesday, June 15, 2021, 8 am Pacific** **Host: Valerie Malfara, FFI Staff**

Join us this month to chat, discuss, exchange in French about festivities and festivals around the world! Carnival in Rio or in Nice, Mardi Gras, Holi in India or Dia de los Muertos in Mexico, we'll have a chance to learn about different celebrations and if you are up for it, you can share your favorite celebration or festival in your country, or in a place you have visited. The event will be entirely in French but feel free to just join and listen in! Register [here](#).



Coffee Chat: specialties & recipes from around the world **Tuesday, June 22, 2021, 11 am Pacific 2:00 p.m. EDT** **Hosts: Hemily Nogueira and Kerstin Hogan, FFI Staff**

Have you ever considered how the food we eat shapes our cultural identity? We associate many of our favorite recipes with warm feelings and memories of home. We invite you to celebrate culture through food and share one of your favorite family recipes with us. We would like to compile all recipes to an eBooklet downloadable from my.friendshipforce.org for the extended FF community. Register [here](#).

And in July - **Trivia Quiz Monday, July 12, 2021, 11:30 am Pacific**
Register [here](#).



Membership Application or Renewal for 2021

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, which in a non-COVID time provides discounted prices on exchange travel and other benefits. Memberships expire on December 31, 2021.

Special Rate Annual Dues for 2021: Individual: \$20.00 (Please print clearly)

This is a NEW _____ or a RENEWAL _____ Application

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Dues enclosed: (\$20.00 per individual) \$ _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____



friendship force
OREGON'S
MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY

www.fforegon.org

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
MEG	Sharon Harr
Membership	Kathy Butler
Navigators	Barb Callner
Sunshine "Committee"	Sharon Harr

April 14 Virtual Board Meeting of FFI Mid-Willamette Valley

Given other commitments, we did not have the quorum needed to hold an official board meeting in April. Plans for the May MEG and general meeting were further developed but no formal actions were taken. A board meeting was held on May 12 and will be reported on in a later newsletter.

June Zoom Board Meeting - June 9 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.



World Bicycle Day 2021 is on Saturday, 3 June 2021. The fourth World Bicycle Day observance is being celebrated on this date. The United Nations celebrated the first World Bicycle Day on Sunday, June 3, 2018, at UN General Assembly in New York.