Friendship Force
Oregon's
Mid-Willamette Valley
"a world of friends is a world of peace"

Friendship Connections

Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley June 2026

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1 - June 14 general gathering; July 19 picnic
2 - Pres Message; Friendship Shared
3 - May 14 MEG; next board meeting
4 - Raleigh inbound journey; Crossroads potluck
5 - May 17 general mtg recap; Crossroads intro
6 - FFI events; Festival at Sea; MEG update
7 - NA Conf & Mississippi River Cruise snapshot
8 - Apr 8 board meeting minutes
9 - Moonfall Theatre details
10 - 2026 Club Board; virus policy

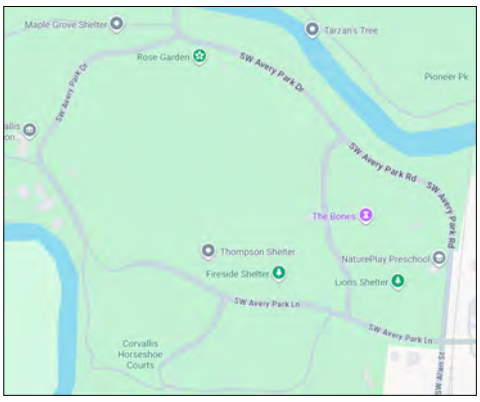
2026 CALENDAR

June 5, 6 pm - Crossroads International potluck (p 4)
June 14, 2 pm - general gathering, Salem (p 1)
July 19, noon - club summer picnic, Avery Park (p 1)
July 27, 11:30 - Friendship Shared (p 2)
Aug 23, 2 pm - general gathering, Mennonite Village
Sept 9 - 15 - Raleigh NC Inbound Journey (p 4)
Sept 12, 2 pm - a Moonfall matinee just for us (p 4 & 9)
Oct 4 - 11 - FFI Festival at Sea (p 6)
Oct 18, 2 pm - general gathering, likely CPI Philomath
Dec 6 - time and location TBD holiday party

June14 General Gathering, 2 pm - Salem Library

Our June general gathering will be on Sunday, June 14 at 2 pm in the downstairs Anderson B room of the Salem Public Library. The Library had been closed on Sundays for several years but is back in operation that day. The address is 585 Liberty St. SE Salem, OR 97301. We will conduct general club business and hear presentations from club members who participated in our Charlotte outbound journey as well as from those who attended the FFI North America Regional Conference and the Mississippi River cruise. Club members with last names N-Z are asked to bring snacks to share. Everyone should bring their own beverage. We look forward to being back in the Library. This is an open meeting, so invite your friends and neighbors.

July 19 Club Picnic



Our annual summer picnic will be held on Sunday July 19 from noon to 4 pm (food served at 12:30) at the Thompson Shelter in Avery Park, Corvallis. Thompson Shlelter is on the south side of the park. This shelter has easy parking access, a cover for summer shade, electricity and sinks and bathrooms. The club will provide will provide fried chicken, pulled pork, and dinner rolls. Members are encourage to bring complimentary side dishes, salads, desserts and your own beverage. We will have a signup sheet at the June 14 club gathering. We do have an alcohol permit, so feel free to bring along a beer or other favorite summer quencher. There are horseshoe pits across the street if anyone has that gear. We look forward to spending time with all able to attend. Invite your friends and neighbors!

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

President's Message

The North American Conference was one of the best - content-wise - conferences that I've attended. The presentations provided opportunities for an exchange of ideas. Lots of ideas!! Weathering seasons of storms was one of the themes—see slide below. The next North American Conference will be held in 2028 in Chiapas, Mexico.

The 2027 World Conference will be held in the September/October timeframe next year. The plans are still for an European location.

Chris Duval, Marla and Russ Karow and I followed up the conference with the FFI cruise on the Mississippi. After the cruise Chris and I returned home on Amtrak. One thing that became very apparent from our trip is that in general people have never heard of Friendship Force. We spoke with a number of people who were fascinated by the idea of our mission of breaking down barriers and promoting peace by traveling and handed out a good number of FFI information cards.

Which leads to the question, how do we make Friendship Force more visible in our communities? Our mission does resonate. We just need to help folks find us. Our partnering with Oregon State's Peace Studies Institute and with Crossroads is a great start, but we can do more. Pease send me your ideas.

As we look forward to 2027, we have matches with details yet to be determined: outbound to Birmingham, AL; an inbound from western North Carolina; an outbound to Leuven, Belgium. YEAH!

In friendship - Marilyn

Friendship Shared Needs Your Contributions

We have had six Friendship Shared (FS) events thus far this year and all have been fully subscribed! This is the next available FS:

- Summer Salad Soirée in the Harrs' backyard with the Sharon Harr and Eileen Minette as your hosts
- Four seats are still available
- Mon July 27th, 11:30-2:00
- Location: 845 NW Sundance Circle, Corvallis - Sharon & Peter Harr's back yard patio

Contact Eileen Minette to register for this event or do so at the June 14 general meeting.

~~FS events are allowed th~~roughout the year, so it is not too late to make an offering. With spring here and summer on the way, consider a meal in your yard or a picnic lunch as part of a hike. Contact Eileen Minette or Barb Callner with your offering. They need this information - event description, date/times, loca-tion, number of people accommodated and your contact information. Barb and Eileen will advertise and work with you on getting people signed up.

May 14 MEG Recap

A MEG (Meet, Eat and Get Acquainted) dinner was held at Long Timber Brewing in Monroe on May 14 at 6 pm. Nine club members were able to attend. Per usual, conversation was wide ranging with a focus on recent trips, upcoming travel plans, and grandkid activities. We were situated in Long Timber's "back room," the space used for the Birmingham journey welcome dinner. Food as always was great.

Two-fisted drinking - one advantage of server error

Begin with dessert - often a winning life strategy

Board Meetings

The date for the next FFOMWV Board meeting is Wed May 27 at 4 pm, an earlier than usual date given upcoming travel for board members. All meetings are held by ZOOM. All current and prospective club members are welcomed to participate. If interested, call or send an email to President Marilyn Peterson and she will send you the ZOOM link.

Raleigh NC Inbound Journey - Sept 9-15

Plans for our fall Raleigh inbound are well in hand:

- Marilyn Peterson has agreed to be our point person while the visiting club is here. She will deal with any unanticipated needs that arise during the journey
- Dennis Murphy has developed a journey budget. Ambassadors will be charged $415 as things now stand. Slight changes may be made as plans are finalized
- Rita Powell will make gift bags for incoming ambassadors. If you have ideas on content for the bags, contact Marla Karow who will be coordinating such

This is the current itinerary:

- Wed Sept 9 - arrive at EUG - ambassadors may be coming in a different times, if not there may be a welcoming dinner at Long Timber in Monroe
- Thur Sept 10 - welcoming breakfast for all if differential arrival times on Wednesday; then head to coast
- Fri Sept 11 - morning class at Hatfield Marine Science Center; afternoon rendezvous at Lumos
- Sat Sept 12 - hazelnut & other crop farm tour; 2pm Moonfall performance just for us. If we are unable to sell all tickets, Marlene can advertise for us as well.
- Sun Sept 13 - open morning; Albany carrousel & Monteith House tour in afternoon; small group dinners in evening
- Mon Sept 14 - Christmas tree and small farm forestry tour in the morning; Fort Hoskins tour in early afternoon; farewell dinner at the Mennonite Lakeside Center with most foods and drink provided
- Tues Sept 15 - homeward bound

Please add these dates to your calendar and plan to participate with the group as you are able if you are not already hosting in some way.

Marla & Russ Karow, Dennis Murphy, Marilyn Petereson, Mary Ellen Lind, Eileen Minette, and Linda Pierson
Your Raleigh Planning Team

Crossroads International Conversation School 40th Anniversary

WHEN: Fri June 5, 6-8 pm
WHERE: Walnut Barn Martin Luther King Park
WHO: current and former conversation school students, teachers, supporters, friends, and family
WHAT: A potluck. Bring a dish to share as well as your own beverage. Plates, cutlery and cake will be provided

May 17 General Gathering

Fifteen club members gathered at the CPI Building in Philomath for our May general gathering. Our speakers were Kara Hanson and Sandy Riverman with Crossroads International (CRI), director and board member, respectively. Since 1969, CRI has connected international students, faculty, scholars, and their family members and friends from around the world with local volunteers for friendship and language education. Sound familiar? CRI has three primary programs - a conversation school for women, the monthly International Visiting Faculty and Scholar Coffee at the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center (of which FFOMWV is now also a co-sponsor) and a three-day homestay program. Our to groups share many interests and there should be other opportunities for FFOMWV members to become involved with CRI—see below. We also conducted other club business - journey updates including opportunities to assist with the incoming Raleigh journey; Friendship Shared updates (see page 2), need for people to help with the CMLC coffee; and announcement of other upcoming club events. Cookies of several types, cheese and crackers, deviled eggs and fruits were among the nibble offerings provided by club members.

Crossroads International - How You Can Get Involved

1. Signup to help co-host a second-Friday Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center international faculty and scholar coffee. Signup sheets will be available at all club gatherings
2. Contact Kara Hanson to assist with the conversation school—you can be a teacher's assistant—or to find out how to register to be a home host for their 3-day home stay program.

friendship force international

2026 Online Training For Leaders and Members

To view recordings from 2025, scroll down and click on the corresponding link.

Please note that by attending, you agree to being recorded during the sessions, and the recordings may be made available to other FFI members for t

Month	Training Topic	Presenter	Date/time	Registration link
June	General Club and Journey Q & A	Allison Lindsey, FFI Staff	6/11/2026, 19:00 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/2wTBvRTuQ8
	Using AI in Your Favour Within FFI's Context	Hemily Nogueira, FFI Staff	6/15/2026 12:30 EST	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fPXL7irZSIvO4
July	Open World Info Session	Taryn Roberts, FFI Staff	7/01/2026 12:00 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/zTBmGNNDSB-EoPyQLQ_cgA
	Journey Coordinator Training	Hemily Nogueira, FFI Staff	7/13/2026 13:00 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/KodLQh6TTAWvCBCaHNVvfQ
August	New Member Orientation	Satoshi Nagae, FFI Staff	8/04/2026 11:00 am eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/PbjC3gXURL6w0rpLEwzWAA
September	Matching Process	Kimberly Fraser, FFI Staff	9/7/2026 20:30 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Ts9YFvzlTr2BX9ViQJ7tyQ
	Planning Special Journeys	Hemily Nogueira, FFI Staff	TBD	

FFI Events

Sign into your MyFF account to find out more about these training sessions as well as other FFI online offerings

Festival at Sea 2026

Join fellow FFI members from around the world for an unforgettable **Festival at Sea** as we explore one of the most remote and biologically rich regions on Earth — the breathtaking Great Bear Rainforest. This exclusive 7-day Friendship Force cruise sails roundtrip from Seattle, USA, to Ketchikan, Alaska, offering dramatic coastal scenery, incredible wildlife viewing, and meaningful connections with your global Friendship Force community.

Festival at Sea: The Great Bear Rainforest
Journey #: 26434 (MyFF)
Dates: October 4-11, 2026
Departure: Roundtrip from Seattle, USA
Spots Available: 80
Costs: Cabins start at $1,084 per person plus additional $225 FFI program fee. Oceanview, verandah, and suite options are available.

For full details and to reserve your spot, please click here.

Put Your MEG Thinking Cap On

We do not have a MEG (meet, eat and get acquainted) scheduled for June but would like to set dates and locations for July, August, and September. We will have a polling sheet for Jul—Sep dates at the June 14 meeting. 1847 in Lebanon, Gathering Together Farms and The Barn in Albany are current thoughts on location - best in summer spots. If you have other ideas, please share them with our MEG planning duo Carolyn Powers & MariAnna Biegel.

NA Conference and Mississippi Cruise Snapshots

Fuller versions of takeaways from the North American Conference in Memphis and the follow-on Mississippi River cruise will be given provided at the June 14 general gathering but some snapshots are given here.

Take aways from the Conference:

- We need to partner with/ become involved with a broader part of the community. Becoming a visible part of our communities is important.
- FFI has updated/spruced up our logo
- FFI has an in-house IT person so expect some improvements in the technology aspect of FFI. Things that have been manual are being automated. Not everything will be done as it has been in the past. That said, club matching will still be done manually.

- Many clubs are struggling with membership and leadership. Ways to approach both were explored

Takeaways from the Mississippi River Cruise:

- American Cruise Lines is not cheap, but they know and cater exceptionally well to their target audience—older travelers
- It is 350 air miles from Memphis to New Orleans, 650 river miles - the Mississippi is not a straight river
- Cotton was king in the Southeast US in the mid-1800s and was the driver in slavery, commerce and politics. Share crop farms were still in existence in Mississippi and Tennessee in the early 1960s

Board Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2026

Present: Marilyn Peterson, Chris Kastella, Russ Karow, Kathy Butler, Chris Duval, and Marla Karow

Meeting called to order by President Marilyn Peterson at 4:01pm.
Meeting was via zoom

March Board meeting minutes: Minutes approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: No report this month due to illness.

President's Report:
Next meeting with Tom Best will be April 9. Marilyn will check on whether May 7 meeting date has been changed. If not, she will find a volunteer to attend the meeting as she will be traveling.

Nomination committee – Marilyn will solicit a chairperson who will then form a committee of three people. Please let her know if you have suggestions for the committee.

April PNWNR Presidents' Meeting is tomorrow. Tom Best's meeting announcement contained the following items:

- If you know of any folks who still have issues with the FFI dues payment process, let him know so he can follow up on them.
- A lot of FFI training opportunities exist. All members should be receiving the announcements of these training opportunities. If you have feedback about any training you have attended, Marilyn would like to share them with Tom. Russ has been putting the training opportunities in the newsletter.
- Reminded us to share our newsletters with the other presidents. Russ has been doing this.
- Recommended keeping a running list of those who can host and the details of the hosting situation. We're already doing this.
- Discussion about paying journey fees to FFI. In the past fees were paid on the portal in one lump sum after receiving all the fees that were submitted by the ambassadors. It is possible for the ambassadors to pay their fees directly to FFI. In order for the JC to know if the fees were paid, they would need to ask Taryn (the RSM) to obtain a report of who has paid. The issue is that we typically wait for the last person to turn in their fees before paying FFI. This can adversely affect those who paid on time (before the 60 days before the journey date) when some ambassadors pay the club on time. Marilyn will ask Tom tomorrow about the tracking issue.
- Marilyn encouraged board members to read Jeremi Snook's email sent today. There's information regarding budget deficit and the next steps for club dues.

Audit of the club's financial record needs to be done. Tabled for now.

Charlotte, NC journey report: Marilyn and Kathy reported that journey starts in about a week and process is going smoothly.

Raleigh, NC journey report: Marla reported currently there are two couples and eight single people for the journey. Once information is received from two more ambassadors, she along with Eileen and Mary Ellen will start the matching process. There is a draft of activities for the journey.

MEG update: Marilyn will check with Carolyn as Marianna is traveling.

Friendship Shared update: Ruth's luncheon and the Biegel's luncheon went well. No other events planned at this time.

Calendar for the next few months:

- April - no gathering due to Charlotte journey and FF North American conference in Memphis
- May 17 gathering – at CPI. Speaker will be Kara Hanson from Crossroads International.
- June 14 gathering – at Salem library in Anderson room B. Parking ramp is free. Agenda will include reports on Charlotte visit, FF regional conference and stern wheel trip.
- July 19 – picnic at Thompson shelter in Corvallis
- August meeting rescheduled for the 30th. Kathy will check on a room at the Mennonite Village. Agenda will include Raleigh journey orientation
- September 12 – Moonfall at 2 pm. This will count as our September meeting.
- September 14– Farewell dinner for Raleigh journey at Mennonite Village
- October 18 – Need venue
- November 15 – Need venue, Election of officers
- December - holiday party??

Next board meeting: May 13 at 4pm.
Meeting adjourned at: 4:32pm

MOONFALL 2026

As indicated in the inbound Raleigh journey article on page 4, we will have a Moonfall matinee on Saturday Sept 12 at 2 pm. ***The Moonfall cast is doing this show just for us***. Their regular season this year was in May. Our Raleigh ambassadors will attend this show (their ticket is included in the journey fee). Drivers and hosts will need to purchase their own tickets as will other club members. We are figuring 25 seats for ambassadors and hosts/drivers. We need to sell another ~25 tickets to fill the house as we have always done in years past. Please share information about this show with friends and family. You can serve as the coordinator for a group of acquaintances and collect seat fees from them. But be sure to check with Chris to be sure seats are still available as you do this. Thanks for your promotional efforts. *Your Raleigh Planning Team*

MOONFALL

GOES TO THE COUNTRY

An afternoon of country music and comedy

This is an encore performance of their May show in cooperation with Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley

Saturday Sept 12, 2 pm - tickets $25

11140 Orrs Corner Rd, Rickreall, OR 97371

Please contact Chris Duval to reserve seats and get payment information

TICKETS SALE PROFITS SUPPORT FFOMWV

Your 2026 Leadership Team

Board Members

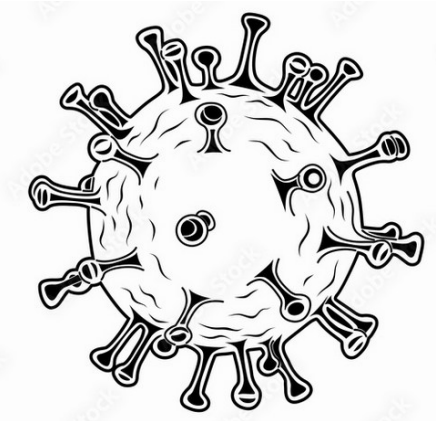
President	Marilyn Peterson
Vice-President	Ruth Wyse
Secretary	Marla Karow
Treasurer	Chris Kastella
Journey Organizer	Chris Duval
Newsletter/Archives	Russ Karow

Activity Leads

Friendship Shared	Barb Callner Eileen Minette
Internet Communications	Marilyn Peterson
MEG Coordinators	Carolyn Powers Marianna Biegel
Sunshine Committee	Mary Ellen Lind

2026 Journey Coordinators

April 17-22 - Charlotte NC outbound - Marilyn Peterson and Kathy Butler
Sept 9-15 - Raleigh NC inbound - coordinators needed!

Viruses And Our Club

As you are likely aware from personal experience or that of friends, an array of viruses are circulating in our communities - flu, norovirus, COVID, RSV, and even measles in some parts of the US. The effects of these viruses vary significantly for individuals and can result in hospitalization in some cases. Your board encourages all of the members of our community to get the whole array of vaccines available to you 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. If you are not feeling well in even the slightest way, please do not attend club gatherings. We have a number of members with medical conditions of various sorts - many of us are of that age. We all need to do our very best to protect ourselves and each other in every way that we can.