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 Aug 2026

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2026 CALENDAR

Aug 5, 4:30 pm - MEG, 1847 Bar & Grill, Lebanon (p 1)
Aug 23, 2 pm - general gathering, Mary's Place, Mennonite Village, Albany-*Raleigh orientation is part of this gathering* (p 1)
Aug 25, 2 pm - Friendship Shared Tea at the Biegel's (p 3)
Sept 9 - 15 - Raleigh NC Inbound Journey (p 9)
Sept 12, 2 pm - a Moonfall Theatre matinee (p 6 & 9)
Sept 14, 4:30 pm - Raleigh farewell dinner, Mary's Place (p 9)
Sept 25, 12 noon - MEG - The Barn At Hickory Station, Albany
Oct 18, 2 pm - general gathering, CPI Philomath
Dec 6 - club holiday party, time and location TBD

Aug 5 MEG at 1847 Bar & Grill in Lebanon

Our next MEG (meet, eat and get acquainted) will be at 4:30 pm (note slightly earlier start than announced before) at the 1847 Bar and Grill in Lebanon. This is the restaurant on the first floor of Best Western Premier Boulder Falls Inn - 505 Mullins Drive in Lebanon, Oregon. MEG leader MariAnna Biegel will secure tables for us on their outside patio. This is an opportunity to talk with old friends and to introduce others to our club. Invite your friends and neighbors. If you know you will attend, please contact MariAnna so that she can best coordinate with restaurant staff.

Aug 23 General Gathering, 2 pm - Lakeside Center

Our next general gathering will be on Sunday, Aug 23 at 2 pm in Mary's Place, Mennonite Village. Take the 54th Street entrance to the Village. Go past the first road to the left but take the second onto Clay Street. Park in the lot to the left. Mary's Place will be right in front of you. We will conduct general club business, hear a presentation from the Albanian Alps Institute, and hold the orientation session for our September Raleigh NC incoming journey. Club members with last names A-M are asked to bring snacks to share. Everyone should bring their own beverage. This is an open meeting, so invite your friends and neighbors.

Kindergarten in Selcë Albania

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 - Marilyn Peterson

Greetings from somewhere in the vicinity of Iceland in search of trolls and a total solar eclipse.

Thank you to all who have been helping to prepare for our visitors from Raleigh, NC.

Now is the time to consider how we each can help make our club stronger and more visible in our communities. Eileen Minette and the nominating committee are looking for officers for our club for 2027. Remember none of us are successful if we try to do everything by ourselves. If we join together, the task is easier and often the result is better. Look at what has been accomplished by the Raleigh planning team. So when the nominating committee calls, please say "yes". In the past we have had co-presidents, co-journey coordinators, and even a 'committee-president' (three members as co-president).

Growing our club should be a priority for 2027. If you know of an organization that is looking for a speaker, please send me the name of the organization and the contact person for speakers. We're developing a list of those who will make short presentations at local organizations. If you are interested, let me know. We can supply the slide deck. Let's make Friendship Force one of the best known organizations in our communities.

Your Raleigh planning group + Marilyn

2027 FFI World Conference

FFI staff has been working diligently to identify a location for the 2027 FFI World Conference. It will be held in Porto, Portugal, in late August or more likely early September. We are hoping that we can couple our outbound journey to Belgium with this conference. Details will be provided as they come available.

National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day—Aug 4 - In 1938, Ruth Graves Wakefield, the baker and owner of the Toll House Inn in Whitman, Massachusetts ran out of baker's chocolate to make her cookies. She decided to use a normal semi-sweet chocolate bar instead. The baker's chocolate would have just melted into the cookie dough. However, the chunks of semi-sweet chocolate did not mix with the dough but filled the cookies with chunks of chocolate. This fortunate accident was such a success that Ruth started her own company, Toll House, to sell her cookies.

Friendship Shared Updates

Friendship Shared Needs Your Contributions

We have had seven Friendship Shared (FS) events thus far this year and all have been fully subscribed! FS events are allowed throughout the year, so make an offering. With summer here, perhaps an afternoon tea (see below), a happy hour in your yard, a picnic lunch in a park, a hike or movie outing. Contact Eileen Minette or Barb Callner with your offering. They need this information - event description, date/times, location, number of people accommodated and your contact information. Barb and Eileen will advertise and work with you on getting people signed up.

Tea Time Friendship Shared - Aug 25

Craig and MariAnna Biegel will host an afternoon Friendship Shared tea at their house on Tuesday, August 25 - 33073 SE Peoria Rd Corvallis, OR 97333. Start time is 2 pm. Ladies are encourage to wear summer dresses and hats, men perhaps a dress shirt and bowtie? Dressing up is not required for attendance. The Biegel's have a large back porch and gorgeous yard, so they can handle as many people as would like to come to the event, but would like at least a week's notice before the event so that they can provision properly. If you are interested in attending, please contact Eileen Minette or Barb Callner. They all add you to the signup list and work with you on acquisition of your $20 payment. As not-ed on page 1, we do have a general club gathering on Aug 23. If not already done, it will be possible to register and make payment for this event on that date.

Summer Salad Soiree Friendship Shared

Sharon Harr and Eileen Minette, with able assistance from Peter Harr, hosted a delightful summer salad soiree at lunchtime on the Harr's patio on July 27. Eight guests were in attendance as well as Finn, the Biegel's elderly dog. Sharon and Eileen prepared five different salads—pasta, rice, couscous (2X) and fruit as well as homemade cornbread with sour cream as a secret ingredient. Gingersnaps and little ice cream cones (from Trader Joes) were provided as after lunch treats. Lemonade and ice tea completed the meal. We collectively forgot to take pictures during the lunch, so an afterthought photo of the Karow's take-home box will have to suffice. Take-home boxes were offered to all participants. Conversations were exceptional as well. Rosella Workinger was in attendance and told several tales of her life 80 years ago (she is 100+) as a young, recently married fire watch tower lookout (one was 100 feet tall) in the Cascades. We told her she needs to record some of these memories for her great grandkids and others. Thanks Sharon and Eileen for a very enjoyable soiree.

July 7 MEG Recap

Our July Meet, Eat and Get Acquainted (MEG) was held in the backyard shelter at Four Spirits Distillery. Sixteen club members were in attendance. For future reference, while most ordered off the regular menu, Arnie Abrams discovered that Happy Hour at Four Spirits begins at 11 am and he was able to get some good deals on food and drink. Per usual, conversations were wide-ranging and enjoyable and food plentiful and good. The Raleigh journey planning committee held a short meeting after the MEG. Thanks to Carolyn and MariAnna for their planning efforts.

July 19 Summer Picnic

Seventeen club members and four guests gathered on July 19 at Thompson Shelter in Avery Park on a lovely Sunday afternoon for our annual summer picnic. Xiaodan Zheng had given a presentation to us about her life in China back in January and has stayed engaged with the club since. She brought her family with her to the picnic. Son Alex and daughter Beatrix significantly lowered the average age of attendees. We had Winco fried chicken and pulled pork as main dishes and were pleasantly surprised by the lack of yellow jackets. Deviled eggs and watermelon in ample supply as were any array of salads and desserts. Good food and good conversation per plan.

Board Meetings

There will be no board meeting in August. The date for the next FFOMWV Board meeting is Wed Sept 16 at 3 pm. 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.

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 (single or couples) will be provided with tickets as well. Please let Russ or Marla know if you will be a single driver or couple. 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 Planners

Friendship Force International
Building Global Unity

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 training purposes.

Month	Training Topic	Presenter	Date/time	Registration link
August	New Member Orientation	Satoshi Nagae, FFI Staff	8/04/2026 11:00 am eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/PbjC3gXURL6w0rpLEwzWAA
	How FF Sarasota uses ChatGpt to market and grow their club	Abe Lederman, FF Sarasota	811/2026 13:00 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/mB2_d0bJQsSrTDxk9WKHEw
September	Matching Process	Kimberly Fraser, FFI Staff	9/7/2026 20:30 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Ts9YFvzITr2BX9ViQJ7tyQ
	Planning Special Journeys	Hemily Nogueira, FFI Staff	TBD	
	New Member Orientation	Taryn Roberts, FFI Staff	9/10/2026 14:00 eastern	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/K8XvKh4dQM6FUVfUSGOfXQ

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

All-in-One Place Upcoming Club Event List

- **Aug 5, 5 pm - MEG** – 1857 Bar and Grill - 505 Mullins Dr, Lebanon, OR 97355 (behind the Best Western). Please let MariAnna Biegel know if you plan to attend
- **Aug 23, 2 pm – general gathering** – Mary's Place, Mennonite Village. A-M bring snacks to share
- **Aug 25, 2 pm - Friendship Shared Tea** - the Biegel's—see page 3 for details and registration
- **Sept 9, 1 pm - Raleigh Inbound Welcome Lunch** – Long Timber Brewing, Monroe OR
- **Sept 11, 10 am – CMLC International Coffee** – 2638 NW Jackson Ave, Corvallis, OR 97330. This is in the midst of the Raleigh inbound. Ruth Wyse will be our rep, but others are welcome to attend.
- **Sept 12, 2 pm** - **Moonfall Theatre Encore Performance!** Moonfall's shows were in May this year, but they agreed to do a Sept encore for us. Please invite friends, family and neighbors. This will be part of the Raleigh journey. Ambassadors will be provided with tickets as will drivers. We have an additional 25 tickets ($25 each) to sell. Let Chris Duval know if you plan to attend
  Sept 14, ~ 4:30 pm – Raleigh Inbound Journey Farewell Dinner – Mary's Place, Mennonite Village, Albany – club will provide the full meal - BBQ turkey, baked ham, accompanying dishes and dessert. Lemonade, iced tea and water will be provided. Feel free to bring your own adult beverages tpo share as well as your own tableware including glasses
- **Sep 25 – MEG** – The Barn at Hickory Station - 640 NW Hickory St NW, Albany
- **Oct 9, 10 am – CMLC International Coffee** – 2638 NW Jackson Ave, Corvallis, OR 97330. *We need one or more people to be our FFOMWV host(s)*
- **Oct 18, 2pm – general gathering –** CPI in Philomath – N-Z bring snacks
- **Nov 15, 2 pm – general gathering** – location TBD – our annual meeting and election for 2027 officers
- **Dec 6, mid-day – annual holiday party –** likely Lakeside Center in the Mennonite Village - details still in the works

Board Meeting Minutes—May 27, 2026

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

Meeting called to order by President Marilyn Peterson at 3:59 pm. Meeting was via zoom

March Board meeting minutes: Minutes approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Chris K sent out budget reports since January 2026. Will send out May budget report in early June. Eileen will do audit in July.

A new reimbursement form was sent to the Board members. Suggestions for edits included having space for journey number and the receipt. It's okay to take picture of the receipt. Challenge is that there isn't a receipt for speakers or honorariums.

Journey Coordinator Report: Chris D.

Raleigh inbound: Marla reported that all ambassadors have been matched with a home host. Raleigh JCs will send arrival and departure times after their meeting on June 7.

2027 journeys - Birmingham Outbound; Western North Carolina Inbound; Lueven, Belgium Outbound

Chris will contact the Journey Coordinator's once we receive 'It's a match' confirmation.

Chris will send Journey Coordinator forms to Craig Biegel and Arnie Abram who have volunteered to be JCs for the Belgium journey.

President's Report: Marilyn reported on the Presidents' Zoom Call with Tom Best

- There were a very few (not zero as previously reported) inbound requests for the USA. Suggestion: PNW create a special multi-club journey for 2027 (like a themed journey). Spokane is working on a Hiking journey (possibly with Missoula) but could involve other clubs.
- We could ask the other OR clubs if they would be interested in a specialized multi-club journey.
- Goal for all clubs in 2027 - Become better known in our communities. Good start with our partnering with Crossroads and Peace Literacy
- Tom also shared some information on what it takes to come to the US (visa requirements): lots of hoops involved.

Charlotte NC Journey: Marilyn reported she sent request for $150 to go to the Charlotte Club.

Couple not going on the journey won't be reimbursed for FFI fee as they cancelled after deadline. After reimbursing the co-JC's and accounting for the $25 non-refundable per ambassador fee, the balance in the Journey #26133 account would be $3.25 per ambassador. Therefore, the ambassadors will receive no reimbursement. Marilyn and Kathy received reimbursement for airfare for being JC's.

Community Outreach: Russ sent out International Trifold brochure developed by FFI. Marilyn suggested adding QR code. Chris suggested deleting part of the information so specific information about our club, such as meeting time and website, could be added to the brochure. Russ will edit the brochure in a PDF. Russ will contact Altrusa and the Corvallis Rotary. Marilyn will contact Soroptimists.

Suggestions included providing members with FFOWV business cards. Chris D. has FF bumper sticker on her car. Vista Print in Albany has old FF logo so could do the printing. Marilyn has the new club logo. If anyone needs it for club business, let her know. Also, Vista Print is an online service. The options in Albany are More Ink (does our booklets) and Staples for business cards.

MEG update: No meeting in June. Carolyn wants Board to decide on dates. Board members agreed that members should be asked so will ask members for dates at the June 14th meeting.

Friendship Shared update: Peter and Sharon are having a garden party on July 27 from 11:30-2.

Membership Update: Marilyn sent out membership list from FFI. List doesn't specify who paid and who didn't. Marilyn will contact Tom Best, Regional FF representative, regarding this issue.

Calendar for the next few months:

June 14 gathering – at Salem library in Anderson room B. Kathy Butler will report on the Charlotte journey. Chris D. will report on the FF regional conference in Memphis. Russ will report on the Festival at Sea sternwheel trip.

July 19 – picnic at Thompson shelter in Corvallis. Russ will provide pulled pork. Fried chicken will be picked up at Winco. Marla will pass around sign-up sheet for other food items at June 14th meeting. Members will be told to bring own tableware and beverages. Alcohol permitted.

August 23 gathering - Kathy will check on a room at the Mennonite Village. Agenda will include Raleigh journey orientation. Village residents welcome. There will also be a discussion about needing journey coordinators and alternate models for leadership. Russ will look into options for models and do a presentation. At one point the club had a team of three members sharing role of president. May need to update policies and bylaws if new leadership model decided by club. Change in bylaws needs to be approved by FFI and the state of Oregon. The board will provide food and beverages for the meeting. Marilyn suggested everyone read the current FF handbook.

(minutes continued on page 10)

Board Meeting Minutes—May 27, 2026 (continued)

September 12 – Moonfall at 2 pm. This will count as our September meeting. Need to let Marlene know how many tickets we will need so she can advertise. Ticket money is needed by August 1. Russ will check with Marlene regarding the information needed to make a flyer.

September 14– Farewell dinner for Raleigh journey at Mennonite Village. Linda Pierson is taking the lead in organizing decorations and food.

October 18 gathering – Ruth and Chris K will check on CPI room.

November 15 – Need venue, Election of officers

December 6- holiday party. Linda P is providing a turkey. Russ and Marla are providing a ham. Other food items will be purchased.

Next board meeting: July 8 at 4:00pm

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
- Ambassadors have been given the approximate journey cost of $415. The budget was based on 13 ambassadors but unfortunately, two had to drop out. Costs for room rentals, hosted meal, and speaker honorariums, remain the same. With fewer people, we may need to make some changes in the costs club hosts, drivers and members need to pay
- Rita Powell made gift bags for incoming ambassadors, Sharon Harr origami boxes

This is the current itinerary:

- Wed Sept 9 - arrive at EUG - our welcome lunch is at Long Timber Brewing in Monroe at 1 pm
- Thur Sept 10 - head for Newport. If ambassadors want to make a glass float at a shop in Newport this day, they need to make a reservation for such and pay the fee before they travel. Dennis has arranged a 3 pm tour at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. Ambassadors will get in free, others will need to pay
- Fri Sept 11 - Breakfast at Comfort Inn; 10:00 Hatfield Marine Science Center class; 12:30 pm lunch at Claim 52 Brewing on the bay; stop at Lumos winery which closes at 5pm
- Sat Sept 12 - 10 am hazelnut & other crop farm tour; lunch on your own in Amity or elsewhere; 2 pm Moonfall performance – see page 5. Ambassadors can take hosts to dinner
- Sun Sept 13 - open morning; 1 pm tour of Monteith House; 2:30 tour of carousel; 5 pm small group dinners
- Mon Sept 14 - 9 am - small farm forestry/Christmas tree tour in Kings Valley & honey "tasting"; hosts and ambassadors on their own for lunch; 4:30 pm farewell dinner at the Mennonite Mary's Place with food 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 & Mary Ellen Lind, Marilyn Peterson, Eileen Minette, and Linda Pierson - Your Raleigh Planning Team

Your 2026 Leadership Team

Board Members

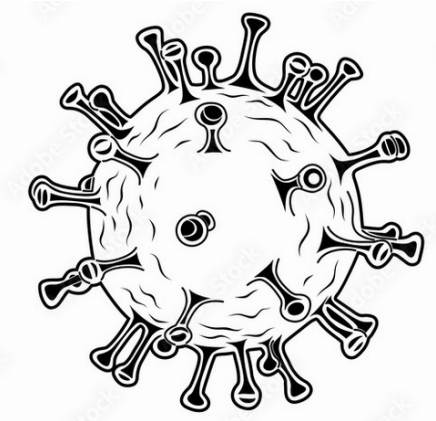
President	Marilyn Peterson
Vice-President	Ruth Wyse
Secretary	Marla Karow
Treasurer	Chris Kastella
Journey Organizer	Chris Duval
Newsletter/Archives	Russ Karow

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 - planning team - Marilyn Peterson as during-the-journey contact

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.