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If you have not yet paid your 2025 club dues, please do so now! See p 8 for the form. You can bring your form and check to the December 8 Holiday party. Paying dues now simplifies our treasurer's job!



2024 CALENDAR

- Dec 8, 12:30 pm** - Club Holiday Party at the Powells' (p 1)
Dec 12, Noon - MEG El Patron Restaurant, Corvallis (p 4)

2025 CALENDAR

- Jan 19, 2 pm** - Club meeting, CPI Building, Philomath
Mar 16, 2 pm - Club meeting, CPI Building, Philomath
Mar 26 - Apr 2 - San Antonio Texas outbound journey (p 10)
May 30 - June 5 - Birmingham AL inbound (p 10)
Sept 11-13 - Hawaii inbound - CANCELLED
~Oct - New Caledonia international outbound?? (dates TBD)

Did you know? National Christmas Lights Day is on Sunday, December 1, 2024. It's a day to celebrate the holiday season by decorating with lights, which can be strung on trees, bushes, windows, and more.



Club Holiday Party - Sun Dec 8

Ted and Rita Powell will be our hosts. Thanks Ted and Rita!

- Address - 2550 Stiles Rd, Dallas, OR
- Dec 8, 12:30 gathering, 1 pm food, ~4 pm ending
- Food = hand-held, ready to eat appetizers – nothing that needs onsite prep
- Plates, napkins, etc. will be provided as well as beverages
- “White elephant” gift exchange – bring a wrapped, less cherished possession to exchange with others - no new purchases and value < \$10
- Please bring food to be given to a food pantry that will be chosen by the group at the event – come prepared with your pitch
 - Holiday festive attire encouraged
 - For planning purposes, if you plan to attend, please RSVP to Ted Powell no later than Dec 4!



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 - Sharon Harr

As this year draws down, and as my term as President concludes, I want to express a heartfelt thanks to all of you for your support over these past two years. Our club has enjoyed some delightful Journeys, both in-coming and out-going, thanks to our Journey Coordinators and to Dennis as Journey Organizer. There have been a number of great, well attended MEGS (many thanks to Gail and Carolyn), a National and a World Conference, some very interesting speakers, and overall, wonderful friend shipping. I offer a special hug to Ted and Rita, for so often opening their home to all of us, and always their hearts. In our club, there is always something being planned for all of us to look forward to and to feel connected to one another. I tell Peter that this is "our tribe" and emphasize my gratitude for this inclusive community that we all have created.

Congratulations and warm wishes to the incoming board, with gratefulness to each of them for being willing to give of their time and support.

- Happy 100th Birthday to Rosella! We'll gather around at the Albany Carousel on December 1st to have a great celebration. How fortunate we all are to know someone who has witnessed a century of history.
- Wishing you all another delightful time at the Powell's for a holiday party on December 8th.
- Hooray for all the opportunities for planning and scheduling Friendship Shared events in 2025!
- No Board Meeting in December
- General Meetings on January 19th and March 16th. Both of these will be held at Consumers Power in Philomath.
- Watch for MEG dates to share great discussions and laughter.

Best wishes to each one of you for a meaningful Holiday Season and refreshment in the New Year.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, and may the Force be with us!



Giving Tuesday is Dec 3, 2024

Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement. It was created in 2012 as counterpoint to Black Friday and Cyber Monday, days of immense commercialism. Its founding and still guiding idea is simple: a day that encourages people to do good. On Tuesday December 3, FFI invites you to join in making a difference by supporting our new fundraising initiative: [Marketing Our Mission](#). With your generous donations, FFI will be able to:

- invest in critical marketing strategies to expand the reach of our message, and
- ensure that our clubs have the marketing tools they need to grow their memberships and thrive.

We know Giving Tuesday is a day when many meaningful causes seek your help. That's why your choice to stand with Friendship Force means so much to us. Every gift, big or small, fuels our shared vision of a more connected and peaceful world.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for being a part of Friendship Force. Together, we can continue to make a meaningful impact and create lasting connections across the globe.

[DONATE HERE - AND THANK YOU](#)



FRIENDSHIP SHARED IN 2025

Mary Ellen Lind, Your Friendship Shared Coordinator

As winter has come and we ponder the New Year, you have opportunity to keep in touch with Friendship Force and other friends by hosting a small group gathering of your own design from January through March of 2025.

While we meet one another at MEG gatherings in restaurants, this shared time is different. A small group of our FF members - and interested potential members - meet in your home or elsewhere for a meal, games or whatever ideas you have to help us laugh and enjoy having fun with one another. This is an opportunity to invite friends, neighbors or relatives to introduce them to Friendship Force.

To host an event, here is the needed information:

- Your theme/menu and/or location
- Tell us how many people you will host - usually 6-10, but maybe more!
- Pricing for participation in your event - usually \$15-20 or perhaps a different type of donation

Your invitation will be promoted at FF gatherings, in emails and our newsletter. As soon as possible (hopefully before the end of the year), send your event information to Mary Ellen so that she can begin promotional efforts. We already have one event in hand. See the article below.

Participants will be asked to contact you directly as host so that you can keep tabs on who is participating and other associated details. You are asked to keep Mary Ellen apprised of event status in case she gets questions or additional promotion is needed. Where a fee is involved, participants are asked to make checks payable to Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley. Checks are to be given to the host then passed on to Mary Ellen for further processing.

This past year we held five events with 42 club member participants and \$1065 for local charities and our club. Let's do this again! HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Friendship Shared - Pizza & Game Party - Jan 4, 12 noon

One of our first Friendship Shared Events for 2025 will be a pizza and game party at Chris Duval's house on Saturday January 4 at 12 noon. The cost will be \$20 per person plus at least two cans of food or other nonperishable items to be donated to the local food bank. Six guests can be accommodated. Chris lives at 5026 Riley Ct SE, Salem, Oregon. Please contact Chris to reserve your spot! Thanks for hosting, Chris.



Nov 14 MEG Report

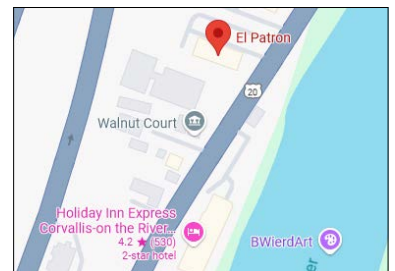
A MEG (Meet, Eat and Get acquainted) was held on Thursday, November 14 at Thai Home Kitchen in Corvallis. Sixteen club members attended. We were seated in the bar area where it was a bit dark but per usual, our conversation was enlightening. Given the season, MEG leader Gail Wolcott asked people to comment on things for which we were grateful. Family, children happy to be in our lives, friends, health, caring partners, and our country were among the things mentioned. Thai Kitchen is a newer Corvallis restaurant and many commented they intend to return - the food was good.



Next MEG - Dec 12 at El Patron

We have one more MEG scheduled for 2024 - Dec 12 at El Patron in Corvallis. If you know that you will attend, please RSVP to either Gail Wolcott or Carolyn Powers so that they can work with restaurant staff on setup. If your plans are unknown, mark your calendar and come if you are able.

El Patron Mexican Restaurant
1110 NE 2nd St, Corvallis, OR
(on Hwy 20 headed north to Albany)



Board Meetings

The date for the next FFOMWV Board meeting is Wed January 15 at 3:30 pm. All meetings are held by ZOOM. All current and prospective club members are welcomed to participate. If interested, send Sharon Harr an email she will send you the ZOOM link.

Last board meeting screen shot



November 17 Annual Meeting report

Our annual meeting was held on Sunday, Nov 17 in the Mennonite Village multi-purpose room in Albany. Notes from this meeting can be found on the next page (p 6). Our thanks to those able to attend and to FFI Intern Emma Kahl for coming up from Eugene to speak with us. FFI is hiring interns around the US to help with communication logistics.



Nametags - Order New Ones Now if Needed

I will be ordering nametags for three new members of our club. I have requests from three members of our club for replacement nametags. Tags for new members are free. Tags for existing members are: Magnet style - \$11.54 ea; Pin Style - \$10.54 ea

Shipping and costs run about \$10 to \$15 per order. The more we order the lower the total cost.

If you are interested in ordering, please send me your name exactly as you would like it spelled and whether you want a pin or magnet style. I will be ordering these the first week of January 2025.

Thank you!

Dennis Murphy



Nov 17 2024 Friendship Force of Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley Annual Meeting

The annual meeting convened at 2:10 p.m. at the Mennonite Village all-purpose room.

President Sharon Harr called the meeting to order. Seventeen voting members were present. Dennis Murphy, who is currently serving as treasurer as well as head of the nominating committee, presented the following slate of officers for the coming year:

President – Marilyn Peterson

Vice president - Arnie Abrams

Secretary – Marla Karow

Treasurer - Chris Kastella

No other nominations were made and the proposed slate was elected unanimously. The new officers will take office after being installed at the January 19 meeting.

FFI intern Emma Kahl was introduced by Marilyn Peterson. Emma is attending U of O in Eugene. She explained the duties she has for FFI, which are extensive. She can be a liaison for northwest clubs to FFI.

Dennis, our Journey Organizer, outlined upcoming journeys for our club.

The Birmingham, Alabama club will be here between May 30 and June 5. Russ and Marla Karow are the co-JC's. They will have 11 or 12 people.

In September the Honolulu, HI club will be here on the 11th – 13th of September. Then they will go on to Sacramento.

Outbound Journeys: We are still on with New Caledonia, IF their political situation calms down. Dennis is willing to go to FFI and ask for a week in Australia.

The San Antonio Club has asked us to move our visit to March of 2026. They are not sure how many people they can host.

Marilyn Peterson then presented a detailed report of our journey to Cedar Rapids, Iowa and the Regional Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In spite of technical difficulties, her presentation went well.

Mary Ellen Lind explained the concept of Friendship Shared, and passed around a sign-up sheet. These events will take place from January through March. Attendees pay for the event (usually around \$20) and then they vote on a charity to get the money.

Ted Powell gave some details about the holiday party which he and Rita will host at their home on Dec. 8. The time is 12:30. It will be a pot luck, and those who come are asked to bring finger food appetizers, a white elephant gift and food which will be donated to a charity.

All members of FF are invited to Rosella Workinger's 100th birthday party at the Carousel on Dec. 1. From 5-7.

The next general meeting will be January 19 at the Consumers Power Building in Philomath. The March 16 meeting will also be at the same building.

There will be no board meeting or general meeting in December.

Journey Organizer Report - Dennis Murphy

2025 Journey Schedule

For additional information contact the coordinators or Dennis Murphy

Mar 26 - Apr 2 **Outbound** San Antonio, Texas Journey #25132

Ambassador Coordinator: Chris Kastella

May 30 - Jun 5 **Inbound** Birmingham, Alabama Journey 25130

Host coordinators: Russ and Marla Karow

Oct 6 - 13 **Festival on the Mekong** Friendship Force International

Additional Information to be announced by FFI

Late October to Nov. **Outbound** New Caledonia Journey 25194

Ambassador Coordinators: Not assigned Contact: Dennis Murphy



A Moment in Club History

Dennis Murphy was looking through our newsletter archive to see if he could find the first reference to MEG. He did in this Aug 2014 article. Our own Mary Ellen Lind has been a driving force behind our efforts to gather in friendship for over a decade! This also resolves the sometimes debate as to what the acronym MEG stands for - Dennis' original motive for the search.

From the August 2014 FFOMWV Newsletter

MEET, EAT, GET ACQUAINTED OR MEG

Some of us who are newer to Oregon's Mid- Willamette Valley Friendship Force club would like a time that's intended simply to get better acquainted with each other and with long-time members in the club! At the July FF board meeting this was discussed and the board decided that for six months through the fall and winter, we will invite you to gather at a designated restaurant for over the lunch hour one time a month.

Mary Ellen Lind volunteered to set the initial date, to make the arrangements with a restaurant and to write this article about the purpose of getting together. Our first lunch gathering will begin at 11:30 a.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, October 14. Location - possibly the "old" Michael's Landing building in Corvallis, 603 NW 2nd St, which is scheduled to reopen this summer as the Old Spaghetti Factory. Please RSVP by October 10 to Mary Ellen if you will join us for our first MEG so she has a count and can verify the location.

Mary Ellen hopes you have time to gather with our FF club members over lunch!

Mary Ellen Lind

Membership Application or Renewal for 2025

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 of each year.

The Annual Dues Rate for 2025 is \$45, the same as 2024. We have been told that FFI international dues rate for 2025 will not increase.

New members who join after August 1st but before December 31st of a given year will pay at the current rate and their dues will be extended through December 31 of the following year.

This is a NEW _____ or a RENEWAL _____ Application

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Dues enclosed: (\$45.00 per person) \$ _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

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



friendship force
OREGON'S
MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY

www.fforegon.org

New Members!

We have three new members - **Marianna & Craig Biegel and Glenda Baker!** We will provide more information about these folks in coming newsletters. If you know of people who may have interest in Friendship Force, encourage them to visit our website <http://www.fforegon.org> or to send an email to our club email address to obtain more information - fforegon@comcast.net

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 2024 Leadership Team

Board Members

President	Sharon Harr
Vice-President	Marla Karow
Secretary	Kathy Butler
Secretary Assistant	Suzanne Strite
Treasurer	Dennis Murphy
Journey Organizer	Dennis Murphy
Member At Large	Marilyn Peterson
Newsletter Editor/Archives	Russ Karow

Activity Leads

Friendship Shared	Mary Ellen Lind
Internet Communications	Marilyn Peterson
MEG Coordinators	Gail Wolcott Carolyn Powers
Sunshine "Committee"	Sue Stein

2025 Journey Coordinators

March 26 - Apr 2 - San Antonio TX outbound - JC Chris Kastella

May 30 - Jun 5 - Inbound from Birmingham AL - JCs Marla & Russ Karow

~Oct - Nov (dates TBD) - New Caledonia international outbound - still some question as to whether this journey will occur given political unrest in the country

COVID And Our Club

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

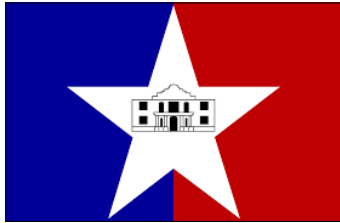


Welcome to Our New Home - John & Ruth Wyse

John and Ruth Wyse have sold their 70+ acre farm/forest stead in Crabtree and moved to the big city (Corvallis). Congratulations Ruth and John! They held an open house on Saturday, Nov 23 to show off their new “digs” to their friends. Friendship Force friends were in abundance.



San Antonio Outbound



FFOMWV is headed to San Antonio TX Mar 26 to Apr 2. Chris Kastella has been in contact with their host JC who has stated that additional detail should be available mid-December. If you have interest in this journey, please contact Chris.

Birmingham AL Inbound

FFOMWV will host the Birmingham AL FF club May 30 - June 5, 2025. Russ and Marla Karow are our host JCs. They will get initial information to those who have indicated hosting capability in the next weeks and start more detailed communication after the first of the year. We are awaiting more information from our Birmingham ambassador JC. Communications between clubs is underway. At this point we will have at least 10 ambassadors, maybe more. Given that the Honolulu inbound journey has been cancelled, there is a possibility that several of the people from that club who were interested in visiting Western Oregon may join the group from Birmingham - an advantage of FFI membership



December 6 - 8, 2024

Mt. Angel Festhalle
500 Wilco Hwy, Mt. Angel

Friday, December 6: **3 - 7 pm**
Come see Buddy the Elf! 3 - 7 pm

Saturday, December 7: **9 am - 5 pm**
*Visit with Buddy the Elf, 1 - 5 pm and
Gigglebritches 12 - 5 pm*

Sunday, December 8: **10 am - 4 pm**
Balloon artistry with Gigglebritches: 11 am - 3 pm

Free admission! No cost to enter!

From Juanita Weigel - hazelnut were key component of one of our recent journeys. If interested in learning more about this Oregon crop, here's an opportunity.

Website with more detail:

<https://www.hazelnutfest.com/>

