



friendship force
MINNESOTA - TWIN CITIES



2020 SPRING
NEWSLETTER

2020 – A Time of Unexpected Distance and Closeness

by Jane Bardon, President

Most of us have had the opportunity to see many countries and continents, and make friends in new and strange places. How lucky we have been! Now, our adventures are on hold. No foreign travel. No domestic travel. No gatherings. Trips to the grocery store are taken with caution, some of us even avoid that simple errand in favor of food delivery to our homes. The COVID-19 pandemic touches us all in many ways. We live in fear for family and friends, and with the loneliness that comes from not seeing our loved ones. Six feet seems to be a vast distance these days. But something else has changed as well, a closeness has emerged that we used to take for granted. As I look out my window, I see families walking or biking down the road, probably quarantined together. Toddlers to teenagers are home with mom and dad and sharing this strange experience together. Some had to choose with whom they will share the risks of the disease that is all around us. This is all new to me, even as one of the Club members with the longest trail of years behind me. Most of us will get through this, but I doubt if the world will be same as it has been for most of our lives.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on Friendship Force. The wonderful intimacy of Friendship Force homestays is among the things we must forego, at least for now. Our age cohort that includes folks who travelled on the very first Friendship Force Exchange, is in a high-risk category based on age alone. We are among those who need to stay home, keep our distance, and learn to show our love for our kids and grand-kids virtually. We can do it. We can face the challenge.

The characteristics that define Friendship Force today, making new friends through homestays, and our current population of elders, ironically, make it unwise to continue our programs and activities at this time. The FFMNTC Board reluctantly voted to cancel the Inbound Journey from Los Angeles, CA scheduled for May 2020 and the 2020 FFI Super Regional Conference scheduled for September 2020. We have also suspended our local cultural explorations until it is safe to resume them. At this time, everything on the schedule below is tentative.

Thank you to the FFMNTC Board of Directors and to everyone who has worked so diligently to plan special events for our club this year, with a special shout-out to:

- **Cindy Cauble**, Journey Director and LA Inbound Journey Host Coordinator, and the Journey Committee and Host Families
- **Rita Mays**, 2020 FFI Super Regional Conference Chair and the Conference Committee
- **Jane Norman**, Host and Tour Guide for the Pre-Conference Tour of the North Shore

2020 ACTIVITIES STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION

- July 11 FFMNTC 2020 Semi-Annual Meeting
- October 10 – 24 Journey to Cankaya, Turkey and Cottbus, Germany
- December 5 FFMNTC 2020 Annual Meeting and Holiday Party
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2020 CANCELLATIONS

- May 13 – 20 Inbound Journey from Los Angeles CA
- Sept. 14 – 17 Pre-Conference Tour of the North Shore of Lake Superior
- Sept. 18 – 20 FFI Super Regional Conference in Minneapolis
(Pending final action by the FFMNTC Board)

Our Cultural Explorations are suspended until the COVID-19 pandemic subsides and it is safe for us to gather together and to meet new people in the community again.

2021 JOURNEY POSSIBILITIES

Outbound to Taiwan – assigned by FFI

Inbound from Manchester UK – assigned by FFI, or Sacramento CA – club contact

Open World Program – approved by FFMNTC Board for 2021

Inbound Journey from Los Angeles, CA Cancelled by Cindy Cauble, Journey Director and Host Coordinator

Unfortunately, our inbound journey from Los Angeles became a casualty of the coronavirus pandemic. Venues in Canada began closing weeks before the doors closed on popular Twin Cities sites. Then it became clear that the health and safety risks of our club members and expected ambassadors were too great to continue with the journey. The Club Board voted to cancel the journey before any fees were due.

I am grateful for the people who stepped up to help with the inbound journey. Special thanks to the enthusiastic committee-Barb Emer, Heather Halen, Jan Lanyk, Evelyn Pallas, Sallie Frye. Thanks to those who volunteered to open their homes to be home hosts-Max and Carole Harris, Rose Emerick, Tom and Janet Scott, Bev Sealy and dinner hosts-Pat Helin, Sheryl Grover, Evelyn Pallas, Heather Halen, Sallie Frye. A shout out to other volunteers: day hosts-Buck McDonald, Joan Revels, Carla Sharpe, Ed Worrell; party planners-Marilyn Reid, Ed Ehlinger, Carla Sharpe; phone caller Jane Norman.

All the research, plans and quotes compiled by the committee won't be wasted though. Everything is documented for the next group to use for their planning.

Cancellation of FFI 2020 Super Regional Conference

by Rita Mays, FFI 2020 Super Regional Conference Chair



Since we opened Registration in early March for the FFI 2020 Super Regional Conference planned for September 18 – 20, the coronavirus has continued to expand and impact every aspect of our lives. The Board met by Zoom on April 4 to vote on whether to continue the conference. We considered the safety and feasibility of having a large gathering in September as well as the perceptions of uncertainty that are likely to prevent people from registering and attending. The Board voted unanimously to cancel the FF 2020 Super Regional Conference. We do not have any plans to reschedule it at this time.

Thank you to all the club members who helped plan the program, activities, hotel, AV, menus, registration, fees and communications over the past 15 months: Louise Anderson, Jane Bardon, Shirley Cavallaro, Rose Emerick, Blaine McCutchan, Mary Montagne, Jane Norman, Vicki Palmer, and Patricia Robinette. A special shout-out to Jane Norman for coordinating a North Shore Tour prior to the conference. Thank you to our Board for their continued backing and support for the conference. In addition, our FF Regional Field Representative, Dale Moore, has been a strong advocate and connection with the Great Lakes, Southwest Regions and Allison Lindsey at FFI.

We had a grand program planned focused on Global Citizenship and Global Consciousness, but the timing and the world didn't line up for us to meet together. Please continue to hold this planet and its citizens in your thoughts and prayers.

Friendships Have No Expiration Date

by Louise Anderson



Many of you will remember our exchange with Mexico City in the summer of 2015 when members of the Mexico City Club honored us with surprise singing at the welcome picnic. Their energy and enthusiasm persisted throughout the exchange. During the 2015 exchange Maru Eugenia Echazarreta and her husband, Jorge Ramirez, were hosted by Godfrey Peterson and Louise Anderson. A friendship developed and an invitation to visit Mexico City was offered and the invitation was accepted in February. Maru serves as the President of the Mexico City Club and used all her skills to tour and guide Louise and Godfrey through many of the lovely historical sites and museums of the city. Maru not only facilitated a boat ride on at the Xochimilcan floating gardens but hired a mariachi band and marimba

group to join them on the boat. Louise has asked for a re-match on the tennis game since she lost 6-2, 6-1! Thanks to the Friendship Force for this wonderful opportunity and when you are called to host, think twice before turning down any hosting opportunities.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

TOTAL Members 04-01-20 = 110

2020 New = 3, Deceased = 1

Inactive = 4

2020 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues for 2020 are \$40 per individual member. \$20 per person goes to FFI (a \$5.00 increase since 2019) and \$20 stays with the Club.

Some members have not yet had an opportunity to pay their dues for 2020. We suspended dues collection due to the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, but we are willing to take your money any time now. A member renewal form was attached with the January – February newsletter. If you need a form, email FFMinnesotaVP@yahoo.com.

FFI FINANCIAL CHALLENGE

Friendship Force International coordinates Journeys around the world and manages the logistics that allow us to meet new friends in new places. In addition to the role of Journeys in fulfilling the mission of FFI, Journeys also provide much of the income that keeps FFI going. The cancellations of Journeys throughout the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic is cutting FFI's income down to the danger point. FFI is asking for donations from clubs and from individuals. More information on fundraising to support the mission of Friendship Force will be coming your way soon.

The Friendship Force Mission

Our mission is to promote global understanding across the barriers that separate people. Each individual can make a contribution to global goodwill. The Friendship Force worldwide network of clubs and individuals seeks to overcome differences among people and nations.

SHARE A STORY

This would be a good time to share one of your favorite Friendship Force stories. Think about the adventures and new experiences you had on your FF Journeys. Or share your thoughts on the social distancing that has replaced reaching out to others. Send your story to Jane Bardon at FFMinnesotaVP@yahoo.com any time.

BOARD DIRECTORS

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John Christensen – Member
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Buck MacDonald – Member
at Large

Rita Mays – Member at
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Tom Scott – Member at
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Non-Board Volunteers

Jan Lanyk – Historian,
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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE OPEN

Email submissions to
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