



friendship force
MINNESOTA - TWIN CITIES



2020 SUMMER
NEWSLETTER

FFI COVID-19 Donations from FFMNTC

by Jane Bardon, President

Friendship Force International (FFI) reached out to clubs around the world for financial support to enable the organization to continue its program of making friends through domestic and international homestays. FFI has lost its income from journeys and events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some staff have been furloughed and those remaining are working at 80% time. Reaching a goal of \$340,000 will ensure that Friendship Force will stay strong through this pandemic and will have the staff available to facilitate future Journeys and club gatherings. As of July 7, FFI has received \$331,440.63 of the \$340,000 goal. FFMNTC individual members donated a total of \$1485. Our Board of Directors voted to match members' donations from Club funds (up to \$2500), so with the matching funds FFMNTC donated \$2970 to the FFI fundraiser. Thank you to the members who have donated to this critical fund:

Louise Anderson

Jack and Jane Bardon

Jack and Betty Lou
Cardinal

John Christensen

Mary Cunningham

Elizabeth DeLay

John Verby and Rose
Emerick

Ken Scherber and Rose
Foreman

Max Harris

Buck MacDonald

Rita Mays

Tom and Janet Scott

Marilyn (Casey) Wells

Susan Wolter – in honor of
Mary Elscott

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2020 Don Wolter Award

by Louise Anderson, Secretary

It is time to nominate a member of our club for the annual Don Wolter Award. For newer members, who did not know Don Wolter, he was our newsletter editor for twenty years. Faithfully, he put out a newsletter deserving of awards. Don died suddenly and unexpectedly in 2013. We honor Don and his contribution by giving this award to a deserving member each year. Current Board members are not eligible for the award.

If you would like to submit a nomination, please contact Louise Anderson at 612-354-0927 or via email at louisemarieanderson17@gmail.com. Please contact Louise by August 31.

The key attributes to consider when nominating a club member for this award include: *Displays leadership, serves as a leader when needed - Interested in understanding other cultures - Enthusiastic with a "can do" attitude - Goes the extra mile – Positive – Flexible - Promotes and supports the FFI Mission.*

Previous award recipients include: **Mary and Gordon Elscott, Louise Anderson, Barb Emer, Willis Unke, Donna Leak, and Dagmar Runyon.**

2021 Club Officers Nominations

by Rita Mays, Board Director

This is the time of year our Board of Directors calls on members to lead our club in 2021. We are seeking a volunteer to serve on a three person Nominations Committee. This Committee will identify candidates for one-year terms for President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer for our ballot this fall. There are also other opportunities for Board and Committee positions to be appointed by the President.

This year more than ever, we are seeking people willing to explore new ideas for creating global connections and an active, engaged local community through Friendship Force. Do you, or someone you know, have interests in visioning, organizational change and leadership, or simply want to bring your passion for peace and friendship to a group of like-minded people? Together, the 2021 FFMNTC leadership team, can help lead our organization into a new world of adventure and friendships.

For more information, to volunteer to serve on the Nominations Committee, or to serve on the 2021 Board, contact Rita Mays, FFMNTC Board member, ritamnffi@yahoo.com or 612-730-5129.

Video Conference with FFI

Cindy Cauble, Journey Director

I was invited to join a Zoom conference call by Pat Gomez of the LA Club. It included Jeremi Snook, FFI President, Marilyn Peterson, FFI Board Co-chair, and others.

Jeremi share the "state of the organization" with us. The FFI fundraising effort has found that the many small donations have made a big difference in the total. People should feel free to donate whatever amount they are comfortable with. He stressed the importance of reaching out to club members and international friends to strengthen those friendships. He suggested clubs systematically call their members to say: "We're thinking of you."

Link to FFI newsletter:

<https://www.friendshipforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/march-16-2020-COVID-19-update.pdf>

Update of FFMNTC 2021-2022 Journeys

by Cindy Cauble, Journey Director

Inbound 2020: The Los Angeles FF Club is very interested in rescheduling their journey to the Twin Cities. This gives us something to think about for 2022.

Outbound 2020: I sent email messages to our host clubs in Cottbus, Germany and Cankaya, Turkey when our club decided to cancel outbound journeys. Here is a heartfelt reply from Frank Rothe, Cottbus, Germany Club:

Dear Cindy:

Yes, it's a pity, that you can't visit us. We fully understand your position. The first thing is, stay healthy! We have currently not a lot of infections in Cottbus. But we have also a lot of regulations in Germany. I think your journey with us would be not so successful. We have also cancelled our outbound journey to Seoul, Korea. Hope you are all healthy. Perhaps we'll see you next year. Best regards to Minnesota and your members.

Frank

Inbound 2021: Sacramento, California FF club was due to visit us this coming spring. They informed us that they are cancelling. Because many of their members are in the at risk over 65 age group, they thought next spring might be too early to make a journey.

Outbound 2021: The Board accepted an assignment for a journey to Taiwan for fall 2021. We have recently received a response from Noriko Kanamoto of the Taipei, Taiwan Club who indicated they are interested in following up on the journey when conditions permit.

2022 JOURNEY TIMELINE FROM FFI

August 26: Distribution of the 2022 Inbound Host Availability Form

September 30: Inbound Host Availability Form due

October 10: Distribution of the 2022 Outbound Request Form

November 13: Outbound Request Form due

Late February: Matches sent out

Connecting with Club Members During COVID-19

by Rita Mays, Board Director

- **Richard Falk and his wife Maxine** are doing fine. They're in Willmar and Bemidji for the summer. Sadly, Richard reported that a friend of his, **Dennis Erickson**, who had traveled to Berlin on the first trip in 1978, was listed in the Star Tribune's tribute to the 1000 Minnesotan's who died from COVID-19. Richard and Dennis worked together at Armstrong High School.
- **Mary Patchin** in Mankato had a weekly Friday parking lot lunch with 9-15 friends throughout the pandemic. Each person brings their own food, park cars around and arrange their folding chairs in a rather large circle. When they finish eating, most put their masks back on. They met in the school and church parking lots.
- **Les Gable** has met with his friends to walk in the parks around the city. He's found that we have an amazing system of parks and trails! Three Rivers Parks are great!

- **Mary McKenna**, now 97 and one of our oldest long-time members, entered hospice in February at the home of her daughter Nellie. Nellie said Mary would love to have cards from old friends. They can be sent to 2319 Village Terrace, Bloomington MN 55431.
- **Jane Norman** had a socially distant happy hour in her backyard. Everyone brought their own beverage and food and sat in the seats she assigned distanced around her deck.



Thirty-three Years of Friendship and Adventure

by *Joyce Sharp, past President*

Buck MacDonald asked me to write a small article for the next FF Newsletter. I said: "okay," but now I am wondering why I said that. Oh, well, here goes:

Over thirty years ago, someone invited me to a Friendship Force event so I went to see what it was all about. I thought it sounded good, so in 1987 I joined. Before I knew it, I was secretary of the club. I was a professional secretary for vocation so about every group I have joined I have eventually been the secretary.

My first exchange (journey) was to St. Albans, England in 1989, and then we continued on a bus up to Scotland. I had always wanted to go to those countries as they are a part of my heritage. I continued on with Friendship Force traveling for more than 20 years and managed to go on 23 exchanges. I never had a "bad time" on any of those 23 exchanges. Sometimes things aren't as nice as we have a home, but if you expect everything to be like home, you should stay home. Our hosts usually offer us everything they have.

I was asked to be the director for an exchange to Australia in 1995. I thought that was a l o n g way to go, but I had always wanted to go to Australia so I said "yes." That was a very enjoyable exchange for me, and I hope others. I even got to hug a kangaroo! They are sooooo soft! My host families were great and they have been here in the US to visit me. I hear from them by email quite regularly, including last week when I received an email to see if I was okay in the riots going on here in Minneapolis.



I have never been sorry that I joined Friendship Force. Besides seeing many new places in the world, we also get to meet many lovely, fun, entertaining, and interesting people. What more could you want?

REMEMBERING

Mary Elscott 1931 – 2020



Elscott, Mary A. of Bloomington, 88, pass-ed away peacefully on June 3, 2020. She was born Mary Ann Kohan in Minneapolis. Her loving blended family was formed in August 1963 when she married Gordon Elscott. Mary loved meeting and talking to people, and could make a new friend anywhere at any time. She had a positive and adventurous spirit and would say yes to virtually any new experience. Mary loved to travel and hosted guests from around the world as a member of Friendship Force International. Mary was preceded in death by her son, Brian Nelson, and sisters Nina and Janice. She is survived by her husband, Gordon; daughters, Paula Nelson, Penny Johnson and Jane (Jon) Warfel; son, Bruce (Lisa) Elscott; brothers, Bert (Eva) Gabrielson and Tom Gabrielson, and six grandchildren. She will be dearly missed by her large extended family and numerous friends. A celebration of Mary's life will be held at a later date.

StarTribune June 14, 2020.

Mary and Gordon have been active members of our club since 1978 when the club was founded. Mary and Gordon participated in the club's first exchange to Berlin, Germany in June of 1978. Mary stepped up to serve as exchange director in 1986 when the club went to Chiapas, Mexico and then coordinated the return visit by the Chiapas Club. Additionally, Mary lead exchanges to Madison, Wisconsin in 1997, Liberty Ville, Illinois in 2002, and Northern Illinois in 2003. Mary continued contributing to the club by serving on the Board of Directors as Vice President in 1989 and Secretary from 1978-1982. The Elscott's hosted our club's holiday party for many years and their enthusiastic and "can do" attitude have had a positive effect on the club's success.

Excerpted from Don Wolter Award Presentation, December 8, 2019

Cards can be sent to 8100 Russell Avenue South #316, Bloomington MN 55431

Mur (Muriel) Senn 1922 - 2020

Senn, Muriel G. (Mur) Age 98, of Orono. Passed away on 6/29/20. She was born on 1/21/22 to English parents who emigrated to the U.S. after WW1. Survived by children Geoff (Nancy) of Minnetonka, Colin of Maple Plain, Janet of Florence, Az, Beth of Las Vegas, NV; 4 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. Mur saw and did a lot in her long life. She grew up during the Great Depression and WW2. She married Ken Senn in 1948. After his unexpected passing in 1973, she did a wonderful job of rebuilding her life. She purchased a home on Lake Minnetonka where her family and friends had numerous fun times for over 40 years. After retiring from Hopkins Schools at age 62 she worked at several jobs. She traveled to a number of marvelous and interesting places around the world. Several of those trips involved meeting and connecting with her relatives back in England. Arizona was her last travel adventure at age 93. Mur was also involved with volunteer and charity work for many years. She loved reading about and studying landscape architecture and home remodeling, incorporating many ideas she studied into her home remodels and her yard. Late in life Mur suffered from the ravages of dementia. She spent the last 3 1/2 years of her life in memory care at The Trails of Orono in Wayzata. Words of thanks and appreciation for all the angels who took great care of her hardly seem adequate. Nothing was more important, or meant more to her than her family. She will be deeply missed. A celebration of her life will be held at a later date.

StarTribune July 5, 2020

You may remember Mur as Activities Chair and her energetic and humorous management of events

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

by Jane Bardon, Club President

The FFMNTC 2020 Board of Directors has been holding virtual monthly Board meetings since April 7. The first few meetings were primarily concerned with canceling local activities and postponing or canceling scheduled Journeys. The Board voted to cancel the 2020 Super-Regional conference which was to be hosted by FFMNTC September 18-20 in Minneapolis. Following meetings with FFI and all concerned, we successfully negotiated termination of the contract without a financial penalty.

Midwest club presidents now meet monthly with the Midwest Regional Rep, Dale Moore. These virtual meetings help the clubs stay in touch with FFI and provide a good forum for ideas on how to communicate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The FFMNTC Board has much to share with you in this newsletter (now quarterly). Board Directors are also reaching out to each of you to check on your well-being and to seek stories to share in our newsletter.

If you haven't heard from anyone yet, check in with one of the Club Officers listed on this page to be sure that your contact information is correct and up-to-date.

2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The **2020 FFMNTC Annual General Membership Meeting and Holiday Party will not be held as planned on December 5** due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are considering plans to hold a virtual meeting to elect officers for 2021, to present the Don Wolter Award and share our 2020 reports. We'll let you know the details in the Fall Newsletter and/or by a special announcement.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

TOTAL Members 07-07-20 = 108

2020 New = 3, Deceased = 2

Inactive = 5

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 FFI Journeys. Or share your thoughts on the social distancing or virtual communications we rely on to reach out to others. Send your story to FFMinnesotaVP@yahoo.com.

BOARD DIRECTORS

2020 OFFICERS

President: Jane Bardon
janeshardon@gmail.com
651-484-7989

Vice President: Max Harris
xharris26@comcast.net
952-938-2101

Secretary: Louise Anderson
louisemarieanderson17@gmail.com 612-354-0927

Treasurer: Rose Emerick
rose3689@comcast.net
612-723-6202

DIRECTORS

Cindy Cauble – Journey Director

John Christensen – Member at Large

Buck MacDonald – Member at Large

Rita Mays – Member at Large

Tom Scott – Member at Large

Non-Board Volunteers

Jan Lanyk – Historian,
Facebook Editor

WEBSITE

friendshipforcetwincities.org

NEWSLETTER

Published quarterly during the COVID-19 pandemic by the FFMNTC Board.

Email submissions to:

FFMinnesotaVP@yahoo.com