



IN FRIENDSHIP



The Newsletter of the Friendship Force of Northern Illinois
January, 2019



From Our President

Happy New Year!

2018 was a busy year for FF Northern Illinois with inbound journeys from Niagara and Oklahoma and an outbound to Western North Carolina. On behalf of all members, I would like to thank Marcia Weissman, Scott Oliver and Joan Harrington for leading us on these journeys. Applause also for all those who helped out with the International Dinner, which was a great success under the guidance of Joan Harrington.

Thanks also to Dave Meyer for continuing to publish our newsletter, Pam Bridges for sending sunshine to members, Sandy Matthews for accepting the secretary position, and Marcia Weissman for taking on our treasurer's role.

Our days are already lengthening as we move into 2019 and look forward to our journeys. Dave Meyer has been working on the costs for the outgoing journey to Thailand and Vietnam with a possible add-on for Cambodia and Laos. This Journey, scheduled for 10/11 to 11/3, should be an amazing opportunity to meet new friends in Asia and explore new worlds.

Scott Oliver is working on an outbound Journey to our friends in Oklahoma City in June. The plan at this point is to have it be in conjunction with the Red Earth Festival, which has not only a juried art fair but also a showcase of Native American culture with a powwow.

Pat Meyer has many ideas for July's incoming Japanese Language Immersion with lessons linked to our wonderful sites and sights in the city and suburbs. The number of incoming Japanese has increased, so I encourage you to contact Pat, as this is an unusual hosting opportunity with many rewards.

Marcia Weissman is working on an incoming Journey from the Florida Sun Coast 9/22-28. Our hope is to journey there in the future when we need relief from our cold weather.

I hope to see you all on Sunday, January 13, at the Lakeside Lodge (3555 Grand Dominion Circle, Mundelein) for our first meeting of the New Year. Forever young Jean Wilson will present Arts and Crafts of Mexico. The last half of the alphabet should bring treats.

Thank all of you for your generosity in 2018. You gave many checks and bags of groceries to Holy Family Soup Kitchen. On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, I witnessed many of our neighbors to the north leave the food pantry with extra smiles, as some grocery store had also donated unsold flowers. Their smiles made me smile and I wish you many smiles through 2019, the 35th year of our club. Participate in our Journeys; they, too, will make you smile.

Hugs, Chris

Share our Message of Peace



FF International: www.friendshipforce.org — FF of Northern Illinois: <http://www.ffnorthern.org>
LIKE FFI AND FFNI ON FACEBOOK



FFNI TRAVELERS' TALES

None of our members offered a Traveler's Tale for this edition. I thought, instead, that I would include a poem from a dear friend and former publishing colleague of mine Esther Cohen. Esther, a poet, novelist, and book editor, has lived for more than 40 years in the same apartment overlooking the Museum of Natural History in New York, where she and her husband Peter, a filmmaker, raised their son Noah. If you like this, check out her *almost daily* blog of poems: <http://esthercohen.com/> They're always interesting, sometimes profoundly moving, and frequently quite funny.

— Dave Meyer

WHAT WE FORGIVE, AGAIN

Posted on October 11, 2016

Peter said
do you understand how possible it is
to have a good life with very little
it is the time of year when we can
forgive all our wanting, when we
can understand we don't have to do
all that seems necessary that we can't
by ourselves make the world
better. We can try.
Just a little. We can invite
the man from Albania and his wife
to dinner. We can be there
as much as we can. We can
understand how human
we all are.

**CHANGING THE WAY YOU
SEE THE WORLD**



FF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

ACTIVITIES



Here is our calendar for 2019:

2019	General Meeting	Board Meeting	Journeys	Other Events
January	January 13 Grand Dominion Mexican arts & crafts, Jean Wilson			
February		February 14 Chris/Scott Oliver's		
March	March 10 TBA			
April		April 11 Marcia/Bob Weissman		
May	May 19 Oak Park Library			
June		June 9	June 6-10 Outbound Oklahoma City	
July	July 7? Picnic/meeting, Lake Bluff Beach		July 11-17 Japanese English Language Learners	July 23 – 27 Boulder, CO FFI World Conference
August		August 8 Brian/Joan Harrington's		
September	September 8		September 22-28 Inbound, Florida Sunshine Coast	
October		October 10	October 11-November 3 Outbound Thailand & Vietnam	
November	November 10, Time/Venue TBA Annual Board Election, & Dinner			
December		December 12 Coyle/DiBrito Holiday Party		



The Social Side of FFNI



Kat York, Social Chair

LEO (Let's Eat Out)

There will be a LEO on Thursday, February 21. We will attend an African dance performance. More information will come from Kat later.

Our most recent LEO, October, 2018

Eight members from the FFNI and Chicago Club met at the National Museum of Mexican Art on Sunday, October 28, for a special Day of the Dead celebration and family activities. The Day of the Dead, which spans All Hallows' Eve (Hallowe'en), All Saints' Day, and All Souls' Day, is a time to honor family members who have passed on. An altar is built and the deceased person's favorite foods and possessions are placed there awaiting the visit of the loved one's spirit.

We walked through the museum exhibits, which were very informative about the Mexican experience in the United States and Chicago. And there was a special room dedicated to the Day of the Dead customs and a magnificent altar on display.

Next the group went to a local family owned restaurant for lunch and walked down the neighborhood streets observing all the colorful wall murals, and even passed by one artist in the process of painting a mural. The restaurant was very festive, with music, artifacts, and artwork from Mexico. It was also crowded! We did not have a long wait because we agreed to take tables in the back by the grill counter. That was an interesting experience. If you have ever





seen the Saturday Night Live parodies on the Billy Goat Tavern, cooks were calling out orders and waiters were running back and forth picking up plates, and you could almost expect to hear “cheeseburger, no fries, chips”. The atmosphere was lively, to say the least. Food was in the tradition of the family’s home in Nuevo Leon, Mexico.

After lunch, we walked back to the museum, where we saw family altars outside in the park. When the celebration started, we watched a marching band from a local high school. Then we walked through the

park, encountering a variety of beautiful, colorful, and elaborately constructed altars. In addition to grandparents, it was touching to see the altars of children who had died, and young adult police and military service members. A Mariachi band was playing during this time. It was in all an enjoyable and interesting experience.



Experience different views.
Discover common ground.

FFNI Journey News

Journey Schedule, 2019



Japanese English Language Learners

July 11-17 (then on to Milwaukee for a second week)

Pat Meyer, Host Coordinator

Thailand and Vietnam Outbound

Dates: Arrive Bangkok Oct. 12 (dep Oct. 10 or 11); begin Bangkok Journey Oct. 13; fly to Hanoi and begin Vietnam Journey Oct. 20; depart from Ho Chi Minh City for home Nov. 2 (arr Nov. 3). If there is interest, we may offer an extension of the Vietnam portion to visit Cambodia and Laos.

Dave Meyer, Ambassador Coordinator

Oklahoma City, Domestic Outbound

June 6-10

Scott Oliver, Ambassador Coordinator

Florida Sun Coast, Domestic Inbound

September (date not yet set)

Marcia Weissman, Host Coordinator

And for 2020

Japan

April (date not yet set)

Marlene DiBrito, Ambassador Coordinator

Japanese English Language Learners

Inbound July 11 – 17, 2019

FFNI has been selected as one of the few clubs in the States to host Japanese Language Learners in 2019. As many in our club are former teachers, or secretly wish they had been teachers, this is a perfect match for us! It's also a perfect excuse for us to discover Japanese influences in our area, and then incorporate those influences while helping our Japanese friends improve their spoken English. For example, our great American architect Frank Lloyd Wright was heavily influenced by Japanese art and design. So, during a morning when we teach vocabulary and practice pronunciation, we'll use photos of Wright homes to explore these influences, practice vocabulary, and spark discussion. Later, we'll do a walking tour of Wright's homes in Oak Park, asking our Japanese ambassadors to explain in English what they see as Japanese influences in Wright's work. We'll be able to break into small groups for this activity, so all of our ambassadors will have ample opportunity to speak!



The week will be designed for hosts and ambassadors to work on vocabulary and pronunciation in the comfort of our homes, then to meet in the afternoon to allow ambassadors to practice English by introducing us to Japanese cultural influences here in Chicago.



Additional activities may include a visit to a Buddhist Temple, art lessons in origami or drawing/sketching, a baseball game, shopping at a Japanese Grocery followed by a cooking lesson, and a Kimono fashion show. **Please let Pat Meyer know if you can be a home host.** This unique exchange allows all of us to explore and learn how Japanese influence shaped part of *our* culture.

Materials and “study guides” will be provided for home hosts!

Marcia Weissman and Kat York have already volunteered to help plan this Journey. **Whether you want to help plan, host, or both, contact Pat Meyer.**

Pat Meyer, Journey Coordinator

Suncoast, Florida

Inbound – September 22-28, 2019

Friendship Force of Suncoast, Florida, in the Clearwater/Tampa/St. Petersburg area of Florida's west coast, is an active club with over 100 members. They specifically requested to make a journey to Northern Illinois.

The journey will take place from September 22-28, 2019. We expect about 16 ambassadors, and plan an itinerary that will encompass a number of areas in our region, as well as Chicago.

At this time, we need volunteers to participate on the planning committee, and also as home hosts, day hosts, and dinner hosts. There will be a sign-up sheet at the January meeting, or contact Marcia.



Marcia Weissman, Journey Coordinator

A World of Friends is a World of Peace!



Thailand and Vietnam

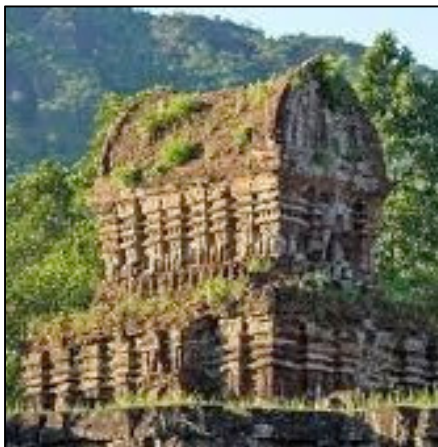
Outbound October 11– November 3, 2019



The Bangkok club and the Vietnam-America Friendship organization both plan many engaging events and excursions to cultural and historical locations. Many of the itinerary items sound strikingly exotic, but I suspect that's mostly because I can't pronounce any of them! In lieu of a meaningless list of itinerary items, I've decided to just



include a few of photos of cultural events/sites we expect to visit.



NOTE: During our 12 days in Vietnam, we expect to have two nights of home hosting in Ha Long and two more in Hanoi. The Vietnamese government arranges these and some other encounters with 'ordinary people,' as clubs per se are not allowed.

COST: \$3500±, most meals/hotels, internal Vietnam flights, buses, cruise boats, most admissions, guides, club gifts, most tips, and a contingency. The fee *does not* include flights to Bangkok, Hanoi, and home from Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). Checking bargain sites Cheapo Air and Momondo, I found prices at \$1000-1200 overnighing in Hong Kong (hotel additional) on 10/11, though it is possible these will decrease closer to departure.

Let me know if you are interested. Don't Delay. The Bangkok club has limited Ambassadors to 15, so we *will* fill this Journey!

NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friendship Force World Conference July 23-27, 2019

Plan to join us in Boulder, CO for this important gathering of friends from around the world.



Share our Message of Peace

FF Northern Illinois and FF Chicago **Party Together**

Several members of FFNI attended the Friendship Force Chicago Holiday Party on Sunday, December 9 at Bohemian Crystal Restaurant in Westmont. Scott and Chris Oliver and Sandra Matthews and her husband joined in the festivities including the program “Carols of Old England” performed by Kathryn and John Atwood.



Thanks to Kathy Coyner, President of FF Chicago, for inviting our members to this festive event, and for sending this notice. We plan to continue to share events and cooperate between our two clubs.

SUNSHINE

Kat York had an appendectomy recently, but has now fully recovered.

If you know of events in our membership that call for notes and greetings from all of us, please let me know. This includes illness, surgery, etc. but also graduations, weddings, births of grandchildren, etc. We need to congratulate as well as commiserate!

Pam Bridges, Sunshine Chair

HOSPITALITY/MEMBERSHIP

Every member can help as we strive to add **significantly** to our membership. Please bring potential members whenever you can. If you would like to get involved, please join the membership committee, or send us your ideas for growing our membership. What worked in the past? New ideas? Email me.

Dean DiBrito, Hospitality/Membership Chair

FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

Please contribute for the hungry! Please bring donations of_canned, prepared, or dried foods, staple items like paper goods, toiletries, or money/checks **to our Sunday meeting, 1/13.**

Scott Oliver, Service/Community Outreach Chair

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE !

If you and your friends are Facebook users, be sure to look at (and “like”) the Friendship Force of Northern Illinois page. You can see pictures from a number of our exchanges and other activities, and also leave ‘likes’ and comments.

Other Friendship Force clubs have Facebook pages as well – check them out to see news from clubs we have visited or plan to visit, as well as those who have stayed with us. A great way to stay in touch!

If you have photos, news, or information, you’d like to post on the site, send them me.

Marcia Weissman, page administrator

FF Northern Illinois Information

FRIENDSHIP FORCE WEBSITES:

FF International: <http://www.friendshipforce.org/>

FF Northern Illinois: <http://www.ffnorthernillinois.org/>

FFNI Officers & Board		
PRESIDENT: Christine Oliver VICE PRESIDENT: Dean DiBrito SECRETARY: Sandy Matthews TREASURER: Marcia Weissman MEMBERSHIP: Dean DiBrito SOCIAL: Kat York WAYS & MEANS: Ludwina Homer & Joan Harrington MERCHANDISE: Sally Coyle	SERVICE/COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Scott Oliver NEWSLETTER: Dave Meyer SUNSHINE: Pam Bridges PAST PRESIDENT: Marcia Weissman PUBLICITY: Joan Harrington COMMUNICATIONS: OPEN PROGRAM: OPEN WEBMASTER: Marcia Weissman	JOURNEYS: GENERAL COORDINATOR: Pat Meyer Journey Coordinators: Pat Meyer, English Language Learners Dave Meyer, Thailand & Vietnam Scott Oliver, Oklahoma City Marcia Weissman, Florida Suncoast Marlene DiBrito, Japan (2020)

FFNI STORE

Please order your FFNI shirt at the January meeting. Everyone needs a Friendship Force shirt for all International and Domestic Journeys. Available in short and long sleeves. It will take time to get the shirts so please plan ahead and order in January for the year. There is a minimum number necessary in order to place an order.

Club earrings, pins and pens make excellent host or ambassador gifts. Don't forget a pair of earrings for yourself! Questions? Suggestions? or to purchase items contact Sally Coyle, merchandise chair. tomensally610@gmail.com.

NOTE: Our membership continues to dwindle as members age and can no longer travel, host, or participate. The following members have **not** renewed for 2019, most for health reasons, some because of distance from our club: John & Mary Lou Balasz, SuEllen Brauer, Cheryl DePaul, Jeanne Eisele, David Fredin, Su-Mei Horng, Amy Lee, Beverly Nelson, & Cobi Stein. We are sorry to see them go, for each of them has offered the club friendship and the hope for peace, which is our raison d'être. FFNI membership is now 46. Please recruit new, hopefully younger members among your relatives, friends, and neighbors.

Friendship Force of Northern Illinois, Membership Application

Join us!

Because many interested friends look at our Newsletter, we include here a form you can use to join Friendship Force of Northern Illinois. Engage with us in citizens' diplomacy to forge peace through homestays and the friendships and new understanding they engender. You can fill out this form on your computer, save it as a document separate from the newsletter, and attach it to an email to our membership chair Dean DiBrito at showrks@aol.com.



FRIENDSHIP FORCE of NORTHERN ILLINOIS 2018 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Last Name _____ type here

First _____ type here Spouse _____ type here

E-Mail _____ type here Spouse Email _____ type here

Street _____ type here

City, State _____ type here Zip _____ type here

Home Phone _____ type here Work Phone _____ type here

Cell Phone _____ type here Spouse Cell Phone _____ type here

New Member Dues: \$40* plus one-time fee of \$10 for required name badge. Fees are *per person*.

Name as you would like it to appear on the Name Badge _____ type here

Spouse name as you would like it to appear on the Name Badge _____ type here

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS and mail your check along with this form to FFNI, c/o Dean DiBrito, 565 Timber Lane, Lake Forest, Illinois 60045.

PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

How did you learn about the Friendship Force? _____ type here

What languages do you speak other than English? _____ type here

What countries would you like to visit on an exchange _____ type here

Please indicate a club committee you would like to serve on UNDERLINE as many as you like:

Membership Publicity Program Social Newsletter Archives Website Merchandise

Do you have special skills, special training, or experience can you share with the club?
_____ type here

List other organizations you belong to that might have prospective members for the Friendship Force.
_____ type here

Comments or suggestions: _____ type here

NOTE: The Board of Directors is always interested in your comments and looks for input from members in order to keep our organization dynamic and active for our members.