

Friendship Force General Meeting March 6, 2020

Punta Gorda Police & Fire Station Conference Room

The meeting was called to order Co President Ginny Dooley, with Co-President Maureen Butt also attending. In the absence of the Secretary in attendance, Joanne Collins, Newsletter Editor, agreed to record the minutes for her. Several guests were in attendance: First time guests, Linda Garcia and Dennis & Norma Meyers. Prior to the meeting, the club was treated to a 20-minute Tour of the Fire Station Murals.

The meeting began with a fascinating presentation given by Membership Chair, Carol Nasby, on Norway. The take-away is that lots of information on visiting this fantastic country can be obtained from a website called Norway in a Nutshell.

Treasurer's Report

Richard Copeland, current treasurer, was not in attendance but supplied a written report as to the balance in each of the 3 accounts as follows:

General Account \$3,251.43

Inbound Account \$6,460.50

Outbound Account \$2,300.64

Total \$12,012.57

Costs for the Inbound Journey from Canada have not yet been totally paid for. Friendship Force total dues payment to international was paid in the amount of \$860. Our income from dues is the same, \$860.

Membership Report

Carol Nasby, Membership Chair, reported that we have 43 members in our club. We are always seeking new members.

Carol Nasby requested a \$100 line item in the new budget for Membership expenditures. There were no motions on her request.

Several members suggested some recruitment ideas such as a Table at Fisherman Village events and recruiting at the Farmer's Market at the Punta Gorda History Park on Sundays. Also discussed was the idea of manning a booth at the town Block Party. In addition, Judy Carson informed the group that she will recruit new members at her Woman's club. She needs \$20 for a vendor fee for the first Saturday in November. It was suggested that she get a committee together to recruit new members for this particular event.

Social Committee, AKA Out and About

Maureen Butt announced that she would chair events in the Punta Gorda region and Luvvy Kovacik would organize events in Bonita/Estero. However, we are still searching for someone to organize Ft Myers events.

Maureen Butt announced that she is currently planning on attending the next FFI meeting in Taiwan.

Newsletter, FaceBook, Website

Joanne Collins requested input from club members on their journeys and other

news for the club newsletter.

There was discussion regarding who is the FaceBook Administrator. Joanne Collins mentioned that former member, Susan Beaudry, may be that person.

She will contact her to turn over the administration to Maureen Butt.

There was no report on the club website, since Michelle Kempis is currently out of town.

New Business

Ginny Dooley announced that the club has heard from International that our 2021 Outbound Trip is to Medicine Hat, Canada in June 2021.

She announced the club inbound for 2021 will be Detroit, Michigan in March.

Maureen Butt stated that she has calls into Allison Lindsay at the International Office requesting an outbound journey for this year, 2020. She mentioned that Atlanta may be willing to host us.

Old Business

Ginny Dooley appealed to the club to fill the vacant Vice President Position since we need 5 people on the board for any possible tie-breaker votes. It was suggested that the 2 co-Presidents send out an email to the entire membership asking for someone to step up to the Vice President position. It was agreed that this email would be formulated and sent out.

There was discussion that Carol Nasby, currently Membership Chair, is willing to attend Board Meetings and vote on motions. Joanne and Richard Collins both commented that the ByLaws should be changed to reflect this modification of club policy should this be adapted.

Ginny Dooley stated that she is willing to serve as Co-President with Maureen Butt until the end of this calendar year. There was discussion that the club look at alternative ways to fill the president and vice president roles. Perhaps 2 copresidents would allow seasonal (snow bird) members to serve more easily.

Judy Carson made a motion to add an addendum to the Bylaws to allow Carol Nasby to vote on the Board. There was no second. A vote was called and this motion was passed by those present.

Ginny Dooley stated that at the February General Meeting, there was discussion regarding

- Whether incoming club journeys would include children;
- How to deal with ambassador mobility issues;
- How to deal with companion dogs.

She stated that the Board met on February 21 and all were in agreement that the “vetting” of incoming ambassadors would be decided by our club’s Journey Coordinator and the Ambassador’s Club Journey Coordinator. Our club decided to follow Friendship Force International (FFI) Guidelines on inclusion when dealing with mobility issues and companion dogs.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 3 at the North Ft Myer’s Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Collins

**Substitute Acting Secretary
Newsletter Editor**

FFSWFL Board Meeting February 17, 2020

PRESENT:

Ginny Dooley, Pres; Maureen Butt, Co-Pres; Richard Copeland, Treasurer; Sue Masters, Secretary; Joanne Collins, Past Pres & JC, Michelle Kemps, Past Pres

CHARTER RENEWAL:

Michelle Kemps & Joanne Mac Peek renewed our charter with FFI on Nov 19. Now with the recent change to “Co-Presidents” this needs to be updated showing Ginny Dooley as the Person of Record (serving as President along with Maureen Butt). The Board approved this change to be done in the “Club Charter Renewal” on the FFI Website.

Ginny has agreed to serve as Co-President for 1 year. Maureen has made a 2-year commitment and is trying to find another Co-President for next year. We also need a new Vice President. Ginny directed that these recruitment requests will be announced in the March newsletter and at the March meeting. Recruitment calls will also be made to members.

INCOMING Journeys:

Once a year FFI requests info on:

- Which Months our Club will NOT be able to Host for Inbound Journeys.
- The Maximum & Minimum # of Ambassadors our club can accommodate for Inbound Journeys.

OUTBOUND Journeys:

Once a year (with a Sept-Oct deadline) the club votes on WHERE our members would like to go Internationally ... In Nov 2019, Michelle Butt and Joanne Mac Peek submitted our next Outbound requests: England, Vietnam and France.

NEWSLETTER:

Michelle Kemps will fill in for Joanne Collins while she is away 3/23-4/23.

Every Newsletter has a picture of The President and a short Paragraph. It should be submitted by the 20th of the month so Joanne can get it in the March Newsletter, which goes out about a week before the general meeting.

TREASURER:

Richard reported the reported that \$20 of each members dues was paid to FFI in January.

Policy on using personal credit cards without our FFSWFL Tax Exempt Form: If a vendor refuses to do "Tax Free" sale, the club will NOT reimburse any member the amount of tax paid. Always get a TAX EXEMPT FORM before purchasing anything for FFSWFL .

\$75 will be paid for each host for the Niagara Inbound to cover related expenses. The JC gives an "Estimated Cost" of the Inbound Journey to the Treasurer and Board for final approval.

MEMBERSHIP:

Procedures, Policy and Goals to Improve our Club included discussion on how to Stimulate Participation, Reach Out to New Members, Invite all members to volunteer and get involved.

Sue Masters suggested that we focus on New Member Orientations. Have the Membership Committee arrange group meetings with our Club Mentors, Cheryle Phelps & Lou Rizk. Invite New Members to participate. And, ask members to volunteer to serve as a "Partner" with one of the New Members to help them feel a personal connection to getting involved and active in the club. This received board approval.

A point system was presented by Michelle Kemp as part of the process of selecting future Journey Ambassadors. Whoever has volunteered the most would get a better chance to go on an Outbound Journey. No decision was made.

Maureen Butt reminded us of the importance of our "Out & About" Socials held at a member's home or clubhouse. One could be in the Spring (April 30) and one in the Fall (October 30). Maureen wants to do more of our Pot Luck dinners at a members home or clubhouse. These are always fun & less expensive.

She suggested we invite guests to these events as Potential FFSWFL Members.

Ginny wants all Board Members to sit together at a table upfront at every General Meeting. This will help all members know who is on the board.

Ginny emphasized the importance of all members to reach out to new members In Friendship!

Our Member Application forms will be updated to include requirements and responsibilities as found in FFI "Guidelines of Good Merit."

Maureen Butt asked the board to pass a resolution to follow the FFI "Policy of Inclusion" Guidelines (see below) for accepting people with disabilities, service dogs, adolescents and children for our incoming journeys. This received unanimous board approval. The final decision would be made by the Journey Coordinator. If concerns arise, the JC will discuss with the Host Coordinator to make the best decision.

FFI GUIDELINES:

VII. "Health and Mobility"

Friendship Force journeys are intended to be inclusive, welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds to participate. This includes children, adolescents, elderly participants and those with disabilities. However, applicants with special requirements can be accepted only if the Host Coordinator agrees in advance that the host club can meet those special requirements. This is to protect the safety and comfort of the ambassador as well as the host club.

It is important to recognize that the level of physical activity required for a Friendship Force journey according to the hosting situation as well as the program itinerary.

Therefore, the Ambassador Coordinator shall abide by the following guidelines to ensure that he/she accepts only those candidates who can meet the physical requirements of the journey. If an Coordinator has any questions regarding these policies, he/she should discuss them with the appropriate FFI staff for clarification and guidance.

The Host Coordinator shall provide the Ambassador Coordinator information describing the level of physical activity that will be required during the journey, including the amount of walking as well as the living conditions and type of transportation that will be used during the journey. (FFI provides a checklist on our website to assist in this process.)

The Ambassador Coordinator will provide this information to the ambassador applicants in writing prior to their acceptance on the journey. The Coordinator shall consider each applicant's ability to perform the physical requirements of the journey when deciding whether or not to accept that applicant on the journey.

If the Ambassador Coordinator wants to accept an applicant who cannot meet the physical requirements or who has special needs, the Ambassador Coordinator must first consult with the Host Coordinator. If the Host Coordinator agrees that the host club can accommodate that applicant safely and comfortably, then the Ambassador Coordinator may accept the applicant."

Meeting was adjourned at 3:45.

Respectively submitted,
Suzanne Masters

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FSWFL General Meeting minutes, February 7, 2020, at Ft. Myers Regional Library

Tributes of Memories, Love and Friendship were shared by Sue Lineham, Michelle Kemps, Joanne Collins, Carol Nashby Maureen Butt and Luvy Kovakic to honor our much loved member, Beverly Harmon, who passed away suddenly on Monday. A sympathy card and flowers were given to her Best Buddy, Kevin.

Meeting started at 10:45 by 1st VP Ginny Dooley.

Guests and 3 New Members were introduced and welcomed. We all repeated the FFI pledge.

Lunch will follow at Edison Restaurant.

Treasurer, Rich Copeland passed out 2 new member badges. He has changed our accounts to Charlotte State Bank which has a \$1 Minimum balance on our three accounts, free checks, statements online and by mail, and mobile check deposit. Current balance is \$9139.63. (Out-Going \$2088; In-Coming \$2,925; General \$4,129). Rich is putting a budget together with all fixed annual expenses for the General Fund. Jo and Jack Cooley agreed to fill in for Rich when he is traveling.

Sue Linehan reminded us to use FFSWFL Checks that will allow Tax Exemptions for club purchases.

Newsletter Chair, Joanne Collins, asked us to submit articles & photos on recent travels, new member info, etc. Deadline is 7 days BEFORE the end of each month for publication in our Monthly on-line FFSWFL Newsletter.

Michelle Kemps says we need to use our website for all FF Info. And "We're paying for it!"

New members are encouraged to set up one-on-one meet-ups with our Club Mentors, Cheryl Phelps and Lou Rizk to learn more about our club and how to get involved in exchanges.

We all sang "Happy 70th!" to Roland Ericsson!

Membership

We will take pix of each new member today!

Reminder that our \$40 Dues are DUE!

Ginny Dooley discussed various topics that have been brought up by various members:

1. All members must pay dues: The vote was unanimous "YES"
2. Allowing Service Dogs. POSTPONED until March Meeting. Judy Carson will give a March update.
3. Allowing Wheelchairs/Walkers. POSTPONED after discussion. Carol Nasby will check into existing FFI policy.
4. Allowing Children with an age limit of 12. POSTPONED. We need to follow FFI Guidelines. Carol Nasby will give an update in March. Note: Individual hosts can say no.

Help is needed with PowerPoint. Richard Collins agreed to do this.

Need of a President. Postponed. There were no volunteers willing to step up to this post. Our 1st VP, Ginny Dooley, will fill in thru March, to cover our 2 Incoming Journeys. Please consider your talents and willingness to serve as President. The Board will accept nominations. Sue Linehan suggested doing a "Co-Presidency" as a solution, where duties can be split between two members.

Russia In-Bound. Sue Linehan reports only 5 Russians have received US Visas. They applied 6 months ago. Another 5 are expected to be approved. The families w/children will most likely be turned down by our Government.

PR. We will start passing out our 10 cent FFI Brochures. Libraries & Chambers of Commerce will NOT allow them. Give them to friends, etc, whom you feel would like more info. See if they can be left at your clubhouses, etc. Help spread the word. "Word of Mouth" is always the best PR. Spread the FFSWFL WORD!

Niagra Incoming. Cheryl Phelps reminds hosts to get arrival info and Pick Up Your Guests on Time!

They are bringing their FF Journey money. It will be given to Treasurer Rich at the Welcome Dinner.

Put all names & Cell #s on your phone.

Always wear your FF Name Badge.

Do a Snack Bag for your guests for late lunches.

Each guest will receive a reusable water bottle, a FFSWFL Pin, etc.

Add Cheryl to your e-mail list to receive her messages.

Make your Small Dinners EASY! ie: COSCO Lasagne.

Give any event checks to Cheryl made out to "FFSWFL"

Be On Time for exchange events.

Day 2 is Welcome Party at Colonial CC in Ft. Myers.

Let your guests decide what to do on their Free Day.

Luvy Kovacik suggested to bring guests to a Lindsey Graham "Our Journey" Concert at 3:00 on Sunday, March 1 at First Presbyterian Church at 9751 Bonita Beach Rd ... for only \$10 at the door!

The Farewell Party will be at Vivante Clubhouse. Joanne Collins said cost is \$20 all inclusive.

Joanne & Richard Collins did a great job with a Power Point to share photos of the fun Michigan Journey last Fall.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:15

Respectively submitted by Suzanne Masters, Secretary

Suzanne Masters

Minutes of FFSWFL Board Meeting on 1/21/2020 at the home of Richard Copeland

In attendance:

Officers: JoAnne MacPeek, President; Ginny Dooley, 1st Vice-President; Maureen Butt, 2nd Vice-President; Richard Copeland, Treasurer; Suzanne Masters, Secretary

Also present: Jo & Jack Cooley, Outgoing Treasurers; Sue Linehan, Past President

Pres Joanne's GOALS for 2020 are Share the Friendship, Get the Word Out + Budget Wisely!

Joanne started with the FFI Pledge.

There was a discussion to

possibly change our General Meeting day to the first Saturday. Maureen Butt will discuss this at the Feb General Meeting and a vote will be taken. Also looking for alternative meeting locations that do not charge a fee.

Sue Linehan told the new board members that Past President, Joanne Collins, initiated the use of Power Point AND having Speakers at our meetings. All agreed it makes our meetings more interesting and enjoyable.

RECRUITMENT:

A Spring Fling Recruitment event was voted down by the board due to the high cost compared to a low number of new members it brought in. It was also noted that recruitment efforts need to be done "in season" in our area, to attract Snowbirds!

Other suggestions were discussed and will be carried out in the near future:

- Distribute our FFSWFL Brochures to local civic organizations (Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Lions , etc.), Libraries, inside Gated Communities, etc. with contact labels. Pres Joanne offered to provide contact labels using the name of a member located in the general vicinity.

- Provide FFSWFL SPEAKERS at local Rotary Clubs (who meet weekly), Library Speaker Programs, Gated Communities, Church Groups, Bonita Estero Men's Club, etc.
- Use more MEDIA for PR: Submit articles; Invite Media reporters to a monthly meeting, an Incoming Welcome or Farewell Dinner event.

FINANCE:

New Treasurer, Richard Copeland will do a budget update of annual fixed Costs (ie: our Constant Contact E-Mail Program, YOLA WebSite, FFI Fees, etc. VS our Income from dues which is \$20 of the \$40 Annual Membership Dues. The other half goes to FFI. All the Associate Dues of \$10 stays in our club. Extra funds would be used to provide better funding for Incoming Group activities and host expenses as needed, with board approval.

Richard will contact other banks to find a solution to requiring a minimum Balance of \$2,000 for three separate accounts (Outbound, Inbound, General). This will free up to \$6,000 to go into our budget for better use! The treasurer will need to keep accurate records for the club's three spending categories. Board voted to approve the move to the One Bank Account system.

A brief discussion followed about possible fundraisers, like the Annual FF Garage Sales held in the past.

We discussed the International Pot Luck dinners that the club used to have as Social events.

INCOMING JOURNEYS:

Canada: Host lists are completed. Small dinners are still being organized.

Russia: We are waiting for final count to complete host assignments. It may be a last minute situation if/when this Russian Group gets approval from our US. Sue Linehan & Maureen Butt are JCs for Russia.

Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Sue Masters, FFSWFL Secretary

FF SWFL 1/10/2020 General Meeting Minutes

Our new Pres, Joanne MacPeak, welcomed us all to the New Year with FF SWFL followed by the Friendship Force Pledge by all present.

Joanne also reminded us that FF Int'l was founded by Wayne Smith, a Presbyterian Minister doing missionary work in Brazil, and Jimmy Carter, then-Governor of Georgia. FFI was officially unveiled by President Jimmy Carter at a White House gathering of State Governors on March 1, 1977. First Lady Rosalynn Carter served as Honorary Chairperson until 2002.

Our new Treasurer, Richard Copeland, reported that we are in good shape financially: General Fund \$4,123; Inbound \$2034; Outbound \$2265.

Joanne Collins, Newsletter, reminded us to send any news her way. And be sure to read the newsletter to keep up to date and well informed.

Carol Nasby, Membership Chair, reminded us to get our dues in for this year. She introduced guests and welcomed new members.

Michele Kemps, our Webmaster Geru, encouraged us to go to the website: friendshipforceswfl.org to view photos from 2016 on, order club shirts, get upcoming trip info, etc.

Luvy Kovacs, PR Chair, is using a local news publication, SPOTLIGHT, to spread the word about our club. Bring a Spotlight with you on an FFI Exchange and take a photo holding Spotlight with FFI Friends and it will be included in their next issue!

Sue Masters suggested doing presentations about FFSWFL at Rotary Club meetings in our district.

Cheryl Phelps, Exchange Mentor, asked for a volunteer to be the Organizer for Hosts. President, Joanne MacPeck, agreed to take on this job and will be reviewing all incoming guest applications to match with the most compatible hosts for our guests.

Bev Harmon, Out-And-About Chair, along with Maureen Butt, are seeking a member in the Ft Myers area to inform us of activities that we can go to on a social basis. These can be “spur of the moment!”

Bev asked us all to think about fun social activities in our areas.

Luvy Kovack suggested the free Concerts in Riverside Park in “Old” Bonita Springs. Bring chair, snacks & beverage! Upcoming dates include:

- > Sunday 1/26 @ 2 PM is The Bonita Springs Concert Band;
- > Tuesday 1/28 @ 7 PM is Stardust Memories Big Band;
- > Tuesday 2/11 @ 7 PM is Stardust Memories Big Band.

Bev Harmon announced she and Maureen Butt will be managing our Facebook acct.

Hosts/Helpers are needed for our 2020 Inbound exchanges:

- > Niagara, Canada: 2/25-3/2
- > Russia: 3/21 -27

Marcie Ellis announced there may be openings for her Michigan club’s Outbound Exchange to Turkey (Bursa, Inmur, Ankara, Istanbul) on 3/29-4/23. Contact Marcie if you are interested.

Joanne introduced our two speakers:

- > Susheila Cherian spoke on “What is Code Pink” and her vision to promote World Peace.

Code Pink: Women for Peace is an internationally active NGO that describes itself as a “Grassroots Peace and Social Justice movement working to end US-Funded wars and occupations, to challenge militarism globally and to redirect our resources into health care, education, green jobs and other life-affirming activities.”

- > Susan Stuart shared her experience with “Code Pink” and Corporal Anne Wright who resigned in 2003 to protest the Iraq War.

Our next meeting is Friday, Feb 7 at 10:00 at the “new” downtown Ft Myers Regional Library at 2450 First St.

Submitted by Suzanne Masters, Secretary FF SWFL