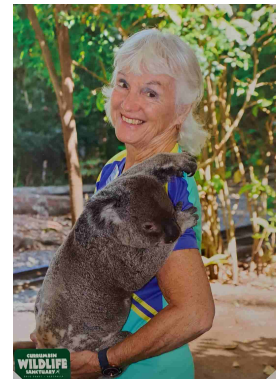




friendship force
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

January 2024 Newsletter



General Meeting & Program on recent Australia Club Journey
Friday, January 12 - 10 AM
Downtown Ft Myers Regional Library, Meeting Room A
2450 First Street (near back parking lot)

It's the start of a brilliant new year full of welcoming inbound visitors and traveling with club members to discover Minnesota, Colorado and the French Canadian region of Canada.

Meet us in downtown Ft Myers for a fascinating presentation from

many club members who traveled to 2 clubs in Australia and some even added on New Zealand adventures. Afterwards, we will lunch at **The Lodge**, a club favorite, 2278 First Street for BBQ with faux mountain views. Carpool with your close-by members!

Announcing 2 Inbound Club Visits



We are *hosting* FF of Western Kentucky Feb 1 - 7, 2024

Ten Western Kentucky Club members arrive on February 1 and their journey begins on **Friday, February 2 with a Breakfast Brunch Welcome Party and ends Tuesday, February 6 with a Farewell Party.** They will depart on Wednesday, February 7.

Maureen Butt & Linda Supakoff are the Host Coordinators *with help from club members*



We are *hosting* FF Minnesota Twin Cities March 3 - 9, 2024

Thirteen Twin Cities Minnesota ambassadors will arrive March 3 and their journey begins with a Breakfast Brunch Welcome Party on **Monday, March 4 and ends Friday, March 8 with a Farewell Party.** They will depart on Saturday, March 9
Click on [Journey Activity Sign Up](#) to see what is planned!

Joanne Collins is the Host Coordinator with valuable assistance from Terese Libby and Michelle Kemps and our *club members*

Have you signed up for hosting,



doing a group dinner, or being a day host? Please be ready to help with one or both of the inbound journeys coming in from Kentucky and Minnesota in February and March of next year. Contact Joanne or Maureen.

It's time to Sign up for our club Outbound Journeys



Journey Coordinator, Terese Libby, arranged Twin Cities to host our club from **June 20 - 24**. From there, Luvvy Kovacic helps her as our club journeys to Northern Colorado from **June 26 - 30**. (There is a one day break to travel there on June 25.)

Terese reports that MN is recruiting a host coordinator for our journey there. Luvvy shares that 3 people in Colorado are coordinating our visit, they can host 14 from our club, and our fee for the days there will be about \$125 total (paid to their club). They ask those going to fill out a **Health & Mobility Form** (click on it) because the air in Colorado will be thinner and some activities will be on outdoor unpaved trails.

Now is the time to sign up by filling out **Ambassador Application Form** (also found on your FF Member portal, under Help Center). The form and deposit check (\$100 for Twin Cities and \$100 for Colorado) should be sent to Terese Libby via **email** with check mailed to 11905 Silver Cobblestone Way,



Join us in Sherbrooke, Canada next September!

Journey dates: September 8-14, 2024

Pre-trip and Post-trip being planned to visit Quebec and Montreal, making the dates

September 4-18.

Journey Coordinators: Marcia Ellis and Michelle Kemps

If you are interested in the JOURNEY (Sept 8-14) please send \$100 deposit check made out to FFSWFL **and** an Ambassador Application. Don't delay! There is a lot of interest. Email FFI form to michellejeanne11@gmail.com It will come as a PDF file. (Need help, email Michelle). Make Check out to FFSWFL, mail to Michelle Kemps at 3772 Peace River Dr., Punta Gorda, 33983.

Application deadline is April 1.

Please express if you are interested in the pre and post trips to Montreal and Quebec.

Welcome New Members



Lorie and Bob Rice were invited by Joanne & Richard to attend our club's Halloween event. We are members together in the Isles Yacht Club. Lorie and Bob enjoyed everyone and decided to join our club at our Christmas Party! Bob really got into "trading" gifts and wound up with a lovely wooden box containing all kinds of wine accoutrements! They are pictured above with their bounty. Lorie and Bob are "snow birds" from Vermont and are Punta Gorda residents for seven months of the year. Bob is a retired radiation physicist and Lorie is an excellent seamstress. They love their two dogs and are looking forward to hosting incoming visitors and perhaps visiting Sherbrooke Canada FF Club. Welcome friends!



Just for Fun - Let's Play Games January 13, 1 to 4 pm

Luvvy invites you to play the game of your choice with fellow club members in her terrific Activity Room in Estero. This is also a Pot Luck so bring whatever you have to share. Please let her know if you are coming by January 11 by phoning or texting her at 239-789-0879.

Remember you can car pool to this fun event!



friendship force
INTERNATIONAL

Do you know about "Independent Journeys" ?

Last April our parent organization, **FFI (Friendship Force International)** announced a new program! Here is the scoop:

"On an Independent Journey (formerly "Individual Journeys"), Friendship Force members can now get to know other members and make new friends **one-to-one!**

We feel happy and proud that, thanks to our generous FF host families, we have been able to present our members with a new way of creating friendships and making the world a friendlier place in addition to our traditional Club-to-Club Journeys, where it sometimes can be hard to secure a seat.

We are off to a great start!

64 independent hosting opportunities have been offered so far worldwide. Both hosts and ambassadors loved the experience and they have testified that these journeys allow for especially close bonds between host and ambassador:

Some of our ambassadors are joining up their Club-to-Club Journeys with an Independent Journey, and you may be able to combine several Independent Journey opportunities, if you check what's on offer. Just browse the Journey Catalog and send off your application today! "

Would you like to host an Independent Journey? [Click on host application](#)



European Travel Information and Authorization System or ETIAS.

With the arrival of ETIAS expected in 2025, passport holders of 59 of the 62 countries that currently travel visa-free, will require an ETIAS waiver to travel to Europe for the purposes of

tourism, business, or transit for a 90 days stay in any 180-day period, this includes the US.

ETIAS implementation is now delayed until at least 2025. Designed to strengthen the security of the Schengen Area, the ETIAS will offer a way for Member States to pre-screen prospective visitors before they enter the region. <https://etias.com/what-is-etias/who-needs-etias> for updated information.

Announcing our new On-Line Book Club

Try something NEW for 2024!

February 14 - *Down Under* by Bill Bryson

March 13 - *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese

April 10 - *The Girl With the Louding Voice* by Abi Daré

Making Shell Creations with Sue January 20 and/or 21st

Sue has many shells and she is willing to share them with you. *Perhaps you might like to make an ornament for our incoming ambassadors' gift bags? Or, perhaps you'd like to make a wreath such as one shown on the right?* She can show you how. This is a casual "drop-in" between 10-5 on the 20th and/or between 1-4 pm on 21st. Bring your own drinks or snacks - or glue gun, if you have one! Please rsvp to Sue Linehan at 941-979-6977 so she knows how many to anticipate!



Mark your Calendar!
Save the Dates!



January 13 - **Pot Luck followed by Games**

1 - 4 PM Luvvy's Clubhouse, Estero, carpool with another club member

January 19 - **Beehive Musical** in Ft Myers 2:00 PM Advance tickets through Joanne MacPeck

January 20 & 21st - **Shell crafting** with Sue Linehan (see above article)

February 1-7 - **Western Kentucky visits us.***Block off your calendar to help and attend events!*

February 16- **Monthly meeting with Taiwan Program** featuring Maureen, Linda, Marcie, Michelle at North Fort Myers Library 10 AM

March 3 - 9 - **Twin Cities Minnesota visits us.***Block off your calendar to help and attend events!*

March 15 - **International Pot Luck - 11 AM** - at Sue & Rob Linehan home

April 12 - **Monthly meeting with Traveling to Morocco** featuring Marcie and Michelle at North Fort Myers Library 10 AM

June 20 - 30 - **Outbound Club Journey to Twin Cities, MN and Northern Colorado FF Clubs**

September 8 - 14 - **Outbound International Club Journey to Sherbrooke, Canada FF Club**

October 2 - 5 - **Regional Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

**CHANGING THE WAY YOU
SEE THE WORLD**

My FFI

The members-only portal, my.friendshipforce.org, is the go-to place for news, journey opportunities, payments, virtual

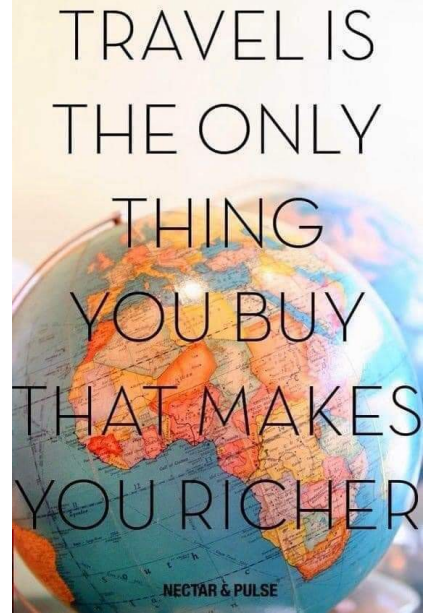
experiences and all other member-relevant information. If you have not yet signed up, please do so. Confused how to do it? Email [Marcie](#) (click on her name).

More Travel Opportunities

Click the link below to review a catalog of Special Journeys that are currently being offered by other FFI clubs. Perhaps there is a journey that interests you!

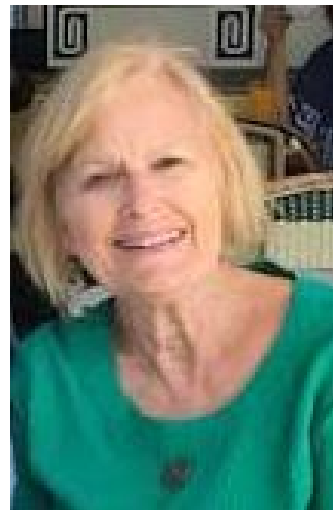
[2023-24 Journey Catalog](#)

[2023-24 Club to Club Journeys](#)



President's Comments

**Welcome to the new year!
May all your dreams and
wishes come true!**



We have many aspirations and goals for our club! But the two goals most front and center are to *increase sociability and friendship* inside our club, and the second is to *increase our outreach to our communities* and thus to increase FF membership .



The new pins for taking on journeys and for sharing with fellow FF friends have arrived! When we traveled to Australia we were scolded for not bringing them, so here they are.

They will be available at the January meeting and for our inbound

guests in February and March.

The cost for members is \$4.00 per pin or 3 for \$10. This will cover the cost. The design is the same one on our banner. It is sunset over water with palm trees and chairs for viewing.

It represents our *laid back lifestyle, and our love of the nature in our area.*

News about our SW Florida book club; we have chosen our books for the next three months, to help you plan your reading. We had an animated but congenial discussion about the first book. See story above for book selections and join us on line!

See you at the January 12th meeting in downtown Ft Myers!

*Peace,
Carol*

Parting Shots



*We thank our wonderful hosts, Chris & Carol,
for sharing your fantastic home!
Merry Christmas memories*



Priscilla



Jo and Jack



Terese



Hugh converses with Kit



Maureen, fresh off plane, parties with Carol



Michelle liked her gift steal!



The Food Line - just yummy!



Debra in action



Check out the gorgeous view and beautiful place settings



Joanne love her gift!

Friendship Force of Southwest Florida

Email Us



Check us out & contribute to Group Facebook Page! Click FaceBook icon above!

|

Friendship Force of Southwest Florida | 2509 Deborah Drive, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

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