



friendship force  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

## November 2025 Newsletter

**Friday, Nov 21, 10:30 AM**  
**General Meeting & Presentation**  
**by Linda Supakoff & Joanne Collins**

*"Visiting Tokyo and Osaka FF Clubs  
with Western Colorado Club last  
March/April 2025"*

**Optional Lunch to follow at**  
**Seacraft Waterfront Tiki**  
**starting ~ 12:30 pm**  
**3440 Marinatown Lane, N Ft Myers**  
**phone 239-257-3111**



Joanne & Linda were able to help Western Colorado Club fill their seats and were thrilled to travel to both Tokyo and Osaka Friendship Force Clubs from March 27 to April 8, 2025. Come hear how they did it and all about the great adventures they had with the friendly Japanese FF members.

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### Remembering Merline "Luvvy" Kovacik

Luvvy was a Twin, Wife, Mother of 3 daughters (Kathi, Kara & Julie), Grandma and Great Grandma, College Grad, Teacher, Minister serving many churches, community volunteer,



but most of all, to us, she was our Star Founding Member of our Friendship Force Club.

She was there in 1989 when it was originally known as Lee County FF chapter. She was happy when the club was chartered on April 17, 1991 with 20+ members and welcomed its first inbound ambassadors from Derbyshire, England. She participated in an overseas "Outbound Exchange" with Chip Carter (Jimmy's son) when a plane load of original Friendship Force members took their first surprise mystery destination trip to the UK.

Lou Rizk said of the early days, *"She was instrumental in helping me as president. Her beautiful big home with the pool was always available for whatever was needed. And she was totally supportive of me during the unusual transfer of the presidency. She always had a smile and a kind word. We will miss her."*

Once I asked her how many clubs she visited and she couldn't recall them all. Suffice to say, there were many. Just last year in her 87th year, she accompanied us to Minneapolis Twin Cities and Northern Colorado FF journeys. She was also planning to go to Washington DC with Ginny Dooley, but by then she was diagnosed with leukemia. She never complained and told me she was not afraid of the future. She was happy with all she accomplished in her 88 years and was good with God and her family. Luvvy, we will never forget you and will cherish you in our hearts as you make your last journey with your Creator. May you rest in peace in God's loving arms.



## Election of 2026 Officers

According to our [Club Bylaws](#), we will elect new club officers at our Holiday Party on December 14, 2026 at Lake Fairway Club house from 11 am to 2 pm.

The Nominating Committee recommends a **Co-Presidency of Terese Libby and Judy Carson.**

Two Vice President positions remain open. Please consider taking one of them. Duties are found by clicking Club Bylaws link above.

Recommended **Treasurer** is **Jane McDonald**. Secretary , **Marci Ellis**, agreed to continue in this role. These members make up our Board of Directors. We must have a full complement of officers to run the club. Meetings are very easy to attend since they are all done on line in an easy format. You do not have to live here full time to be a board member. Carol Nasby will remain on the board in an Advisory Role.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our current president, **Carol Nasby**, who served 3 years in the role. When we could not find a president last year, she stepped up for an additional year. She has been an excellent leader and brought in many new members. She educated new members by having teas and other educational events. She opened her home to us for many events. Please thank her for everything she did and continues to do for our club.

**Our Treasurer, Richard Collins** worked behind the scenes handling inbound and outbound reimbursements, dues and all things financial for 3 years. Please let him know your appreciation.

Please thank **Marci Ellis**, Associate Member of our club, who does a fantastic time being club Secretary, taking minutes and getting them published on our club website.

Please thank **Terese Libby** and **Judy Carson** for being supportive Vice Presidents to Carol and for running to be our next Co-Presidents.

\*The vice presidency role is mostly supportive, attending occasional board meetings via internet and helping with the next programs. It is an easy way to educate yourself about Friendship Force!\*

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**Christmas Holiday Gathering**  
**Judy's Lake Fairways Clubhouse**  
19371 N Tamiami Trail, N Fort Myers  
**Sunday, December 14, 11 am to 2 pm**



It's that time of year again to celebrate the holidays with your friends in our great club! Set your GPS to arrive on time with an appetizer-salad dish, main dish or dessert that will feed at least 8 - 10 people. Last names **A to G**, please bring appetizer-salad dish, **H to N**, bring holiday brunch main dish and **O to Z**, come with desserts.

Christmas Wassail Punch, iced tea and water will be provided. The club asks you to bring your picnic basket with your own plates, utensils, and cups. Please email **Carol Nasby** by 12/10/21 or give her a call/text 507-236-6704 on what dish you are bringing. Please let her know if you are coming so that seating for everybody! Call someone close by to car pool or offer them a ride!

Our past tradition is that if you would like to participate in a fun gift exchange, bring your wrapped gift costing in the **\$10** range for holiday fun. Will will also have the Annual Meeting which will feature election of officers for 2026.

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## Club Inbounds for 2026

### Inbound Clubs who will visit Southwest Florida:

#### National Capitol Area February 1 - 6, 2026

Our Host Coordinators, who will arrange this inbound, will be led by **Carol Nasby** with help from new members, **Susan Hills** and **Kathleen Davey**. They contacted the club and agreed on the tentative dates of February 1-6, 2026. Mark your calendar - **Save those dates** - we need your help!



Friendship Force of the National Capital Area USA (FFNCA,) was

founded in 1979, and consists of 61 members from a large geographic area including the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland suburbs and the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia.

They are an active group and recently hosted FF of Albuquerque and are currently on an outbound to Phoenix and Santa Barbara.

We look forward to meeting and hosting them and showing them the best we have to offer in Southwest Florida.

## Banjarmasin, Indonesia in November 2026

***\*Need 1 experienced HC and 1 new person to learn\* Please volunteer.***

**Soon they want to have our contact info of our club Host Coordinators!  
Contact [Carol](#) today!**



### Announcing New Member Christmas Coffee or Tea Monday, December 8, 10:00 am 2509 Deborah Drive, Punta Gorda

The Christmas Tea and New Member Q & A will be held Friday, Dec 8th at 10:00 am at 2509 Deborah Drive, Punta Gorda. We

ask the **new members to RSVP** to Carol Nasby 507-236-6704 by Dec 5th so we are ready for you. Board members will be there also, and anyone with questions about how SWF FF works, is welcome to come. This is a great time to invite prospective members ! Cheers!

***Do you know that we welcomed the following 5 new members in 2025? It is time to get to know...***

Kathleen Davey, Susan Hills, Lois Hillman, Jan Murphy, and Susy Riddle

***\*Please bring a few canned goods, non-perishables, as a***

donation to the local Food Pantry. It is our club's way of showing we care during this Holiday Season. Thanks\*

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## Recap on NAPA Valley with Pre-trip to Crater Lake

Our journey coordinator, **Terese Libby**, reports this about the recent outbound to California's gorgeous Napa Sonoma Valley **with a pre-trip to Crater Lake.**

### PreTrip Portland & Crater Lake



Seven SWFL FF ambassadors flew into Portland on Sept. 27. For three days, we toured the Columbia River Gorge, the Portland Coast-Cannon Rock, and three wineries for tastings with Martin Hecht Gorge Tours. Diane Gooding joined the group to drive to Crater Lake Lodge for a two-night stay next to beautiful Crater Lake.



On October 3, we drove to Santa Rosa, CA to spend a wonderful five days with the Napa/Sonoma FF Club. Highlights were the Canine Companions Headquarters Tour, Charles Schultz Museum, Armstrong State Park-Redwood Forest, the California Coast, Jack London State Park/Museum, Benziger Winery Tasting Tour. I am so pleased that we had 4 members on their **first** Southwest Florida Club Journey! It was truly a fun filled memorable Pre-Trip and Journey!

**Outbounds, our club will journey to other clubs in the world:**



**Cornwall, UK - The club has 39**

members who pride themselves in their enthusiasm and welcome they give visitors. They are located in the far south-west of England and visitors usually arrive by coach or train, a journey of about 6 hours from London.



The Journey Coordinator is Joanne Collins assisted by Susan Hills. Our host coordinator is Jane Parker, wife of club president, Andrew. We've established a firm date of **May 18-24, 2026**. As of today we filled the 13 slots, with just one more to fill. We will also take "waiting list" applications. Some of us will go on a pre-trip rail journey to Wales and some on a post-trip tour by a Canadian company, *Wing Buddy*, to Scotland in an 18-passenger mini van.

**Sri Lanka** in December 2026 (a joint trip with the New Jersey club). It was known historically as Ceylon, an island country in South Asia. This exciting destination is one you won't want to miss - already some of our members are interested. Google Sri Lanka to see the amazing safaris and snorkeling opportunities. **Maureen Butt** will be the Journey Coordinator along with one appointed by the New Jersey club.

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**November 17 - Book Club Discussion**, 10 am, Carol's home, 2509 Deborah Dr, Punta Gorda

**November 21 - March 2025 Outbound Japanese Journey** - Joanne Collins and Linda Supakoff, presenters at North Fort Myers Library with luncheon to follow

**December 8** - Membership tea for "new members" and interested club members at Carol Nasby's home

**December 14** - **Holiday Party at the Lake Fairways Clubhouse, North Fort Myers.** This will be a potluck and gift exchange with the annual meeting to vote for next year's officers

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## Calling All Who Wish to Order Club Polo Shirts

Terese reports that a number of us are ordering club polo shirts (as illustrated in photo on the right).. She will be sending in a group order. Group orders are less expensive because it saves on shipping.

If interested, send a photo of your completed [form found on club web site](#) to [Terese's email](#) with your payment by [Monday, November 24](#). Terese has Zelle and Venmo to make it easier. \$25 should cover the cost of a shirt (\$23) plus \$2 each for shipping. Terese will let you know if it's more or less after all orders are in and will refund or collect extra from you.



**The Inbound Visit from Baku, Azerbaijan from November 8-13, 2025 is complete. Thanks to Marci Ellis and Michelle Kemps for being host coordinators. Thanks to all those who hosted ambassadors in their home, made a group dinner, ran a Welcome Party or picnic in the park and drove guests from Bok Tower**

**and to the airports and were day hosts. It takes all the club to pull off a successful inbound. We appreciate your**

dedication and hard work. The Azerbaijanians had a great time!

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## A Note from your Newsletter Editor

As you may have heard, Richard and I are trying to sell our home and will eventually relocate to the Sacramento, California area. We hope to join the Sacramento FF Club!

I am looking to train someone on how to do the newsletter. It can be in this Constant Contact format or by something else. I also publish the roster of club members and a few other things. I have documented how I do everything. If you are interested, give me a call at 281-543-9018.

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## Missed meeting? Need to Keep Up with our Club?

If you've missed a meeting and want to know what happened, check out club MINUTES found on our FF Website under Membership Tab. Click [minutes](#). Go to minutes and read all about it. So easy!

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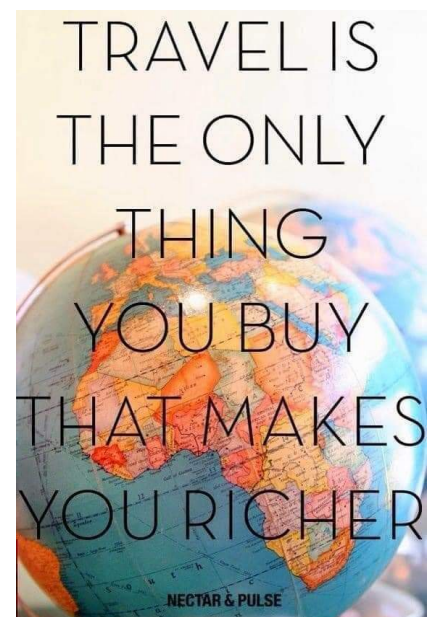
**CHANGING THE WAY YOU  
SEE THE WORLD**

## My FFI

The members-only portal, [my.friendshipforce.org](http://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.

## More Travel Opportunities

FFI has posted all club journeys throughout the world for 2025!



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

## [2024-2025 CLUB GROUP JOURNEYS](#)

## [2024-2025 INDEPENDENT JOURNEYS](#)

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### President's Comments



#### Update to our members

Perhaps you have heard about the changes that Friendship Force International has put in place.

In October it was announced that our parent organization FFI wants to bring a 'global equity' to their fee structure. Since the FFI membership fee is based on the US dollar, other countries were at a disadvantage; it takes more proportionately to pay the dues globally than it does for us Americans.

So they are increasing our FFI dues, and bringing the price down in other countries. That means they want us to pay a larger part of the budget.

Dues for next year for the USA FFI membership will be \$100. This can be paid annually or monthly as they want us to feel that we are a part of a mission to promote world peace. The mission of world friendship is still the same. **Our local club dues will remain the same at \$15 annually. Total cost to join is \$115 annually.**

This means a big increase for us, and in the future, starting in 2026, they want us to all pay our dues online and by credit card. I Know. Big change!

**Our board weighed in on this issue and presented our displeasure about this to FFI. But they are so far insisting on going ahead.** Nevertheless, the mission of people to people communication and friendship continues!

We will talk about this more at the November meeting. Please be there to participate in the discussion.

Thank you to all who shared in the work during the hosting in November inbound Azerbaijan journey. So much fun! So many volunteers!

*Peace and Friendship always,  
Carol*

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## Parting Shot



Our lovely 6 Azerbaijanian gals prepared a feast for us at the Farewell Party.  
Wow, we were so impressed and enjoyed every bite!

**Friendship Force of  
Southwest Florida**



*Check us out & contribute to  
Group Facebook Page! Click*

Email Us

*FaceBook icon above!*

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

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