



friendship force  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

## March 2026 Newsletter



### **Celebration of World Friendship Force Day + Pot Luck**



**Kim Cullinan's home  
Friday, March 13th, arrive Noon  
5666 Jerez Ct, Fort Myers (Whiskey Creek  
Subdivision)**

Our club's celebration of World Friendship Day, will be held at Kim's home instead of Lakes Park because it is currently under construction. Everyone is encouraged to carpool and bring a dish of your favorite country's food, your table service and a special friendship memory from another country to share. Please also bring a recipe card of your international dish to share with others. Iced tea and lemonade will be provided.

To add to the fun, you could wear a hat or tee shirt or something from one of the countries you've visited or would like to visit. Kim lives at the end of the cul-de-sac so you can park either in her driveway (holds 4 cars) or along the straight away, but don't block neighbor's driveways! If you have an extra lawn chair, bring it.

Please contact [Dianne Gooding](#) if you have not signed up at the February meeting and would like to attend. Let us know the dish you are bringing. All members are encouraged to bring a friend and we hope ALL of our amazing members will attend.

*From your 2026 Social Committee - Dianne Gooding, Kim Cullinan & Carol Nasby*

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### Welcome Joy Perez

Joy is a friend of one of the members of the Capital Washington DC FF Group who recently journeyed here. When her friend recommended Joy check out our club, she came to our February meeting and introduced herself. By the end of the meeting she joined our group and then immediately got "on line" and paid her FFI dues, too!

She lives in Fort Myers full time, is a former educator, storyteller and swimmer. She is also a member of Servas (another organization that travels for peace) and has traveled and taught in other countries. She is already considering going on a FF Global Journey to Morocco with Terese, Mary and Lois. Welcome, Joy!

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## Travel Tips from February's General Meeting



After Maureen wowed us with her description of the lean luggage - basically just a back pack - that she takes on her trips, we went around the room and shared. Here are some of the best ones.

- Buy extra clothes at a Thrift store when you land. Donate when leaving (Joy)
  - Go into US State Dept website and let them know your travel plans. Bring laundry detergent sheets with you. (Judy)
  - Pack light, few tops and pants that are interchangeable, use a backpack (Maureen)
  - Your luggage tags name & address should not be visible and view Rick Steves excellent guides before your trips (Richard)
  - Drop an air tag in your luggage so that you can track (Joanne)
  - Get Global Entry for international travel includes TSA precheck (Terese)
  - Get a photographer vest with lots of pockets to wear on plane that will save you luggage space (Carol)
  - Wear bulky items on the plane (e.g., coat, boots) (Everyone)
  - Purchase travel clothes that dry quickly and don't wrinkle.
  - Use packing cubes for organizing
  - Carry a refillable water bottle and collapsible coffee cup
  - Use 5-4-3-2-1 method to pack
  - Use public transport when available
  - Get an annual travel insurance policy if you travel frequently to save money
  - Use Travel Radar website for location tours, trips to compare prices
  - Use Google Flights -compares flights for most airlines via price. Shows prices each day of the month if you are flexible.
  - Take noise cancelling ear buds for flights (Susan)
  - Reduce cords for electronics by using just one multiplug.
  - International converters are smaller-some are one cube with multiple prongs 20. (Terese)
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## **Inbound Banjarmasin, Indonesia November 8-13, 2026**

**SAVE THE DATES on your calendar for November 8-13 for helping to welcome 12 ambassadors from Indonesia! Carol, our host coordinator and her team of Kathleen and Susan have begun to plan. As a reminder, 6 years ago, 9 members of our club traveled to Banjarmasin, Indonesia and had a fantastic time. Now, the club is coming to visit**

us in Southwest Florida. It is our turn to show them the friendship of Southwest Florida!

**How will you help? Host 1 or 2 guests? Do a dinner? Help drive them around, pick up and take to airport? Use your computer skills to create the program? Help put together a Welcome Bag? Help organize Welcome Party and/or Farewell Party? There is a job for everyone! Let Carol, Kathleen or Susan know what your contribution will be to this fun week in November!**



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**Our clubs 2026 Outbounds**



**Cornwall, UK** - The matches of our ambassadors to their hosts are made, fees wired and plans are complete for a fantastic week.

We're going to Cornwall on **May 18-24, 2026**. 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. We have a Waiting List of 7 people just in case anyone's plans must change.

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**Sri Lanka - Maureen Butt**, Journey Coordinator, reports that after she talked about this trip at February's General Meeting, she's filled all 8 seats for this amazing journey to a club in east Sri Lanka with a pre-trip to Singapore and a post-trip Sri Lanka tour in October 2026. The trip number is 26425.

She requests by **March 15th**, that all 8 of those who said they want to come, submit the **FFI application form** along with a check of \$100 to hold your spot. She is now taking Waiting List hopefuls who advise her that they would like to come. Questions? Contact **Maureen**

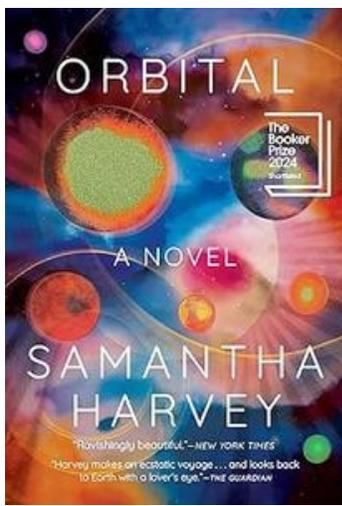
**SAVE THE DATE!**

April 24-27, 2026  
Memphis, Tennessee

**2026  
North American  
Regional  
Conference**



Get on the  
FFI Portal  
and sign  
up  
today!



# Book Club Discussion

March 9, 2026 - 10:00 AM -

Joanne Collins' home, 257 Lido Dr,  
Punta Gorda, FL

All club members are welcome to join the book club discussion of the book *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey. This 2023 novel incorporates elements of science fiction, literary fiction and philosophical drama. It follows six fictional astronauts over 24 hours on an orbiting space station in their rarified weightless world. This book won the Booker Prize of 2024.

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## Save the Date

December 13 - Lake Fairways Club  
House, North Fort Myers - Holiday  
Party 12 - 3 pm.



## 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**

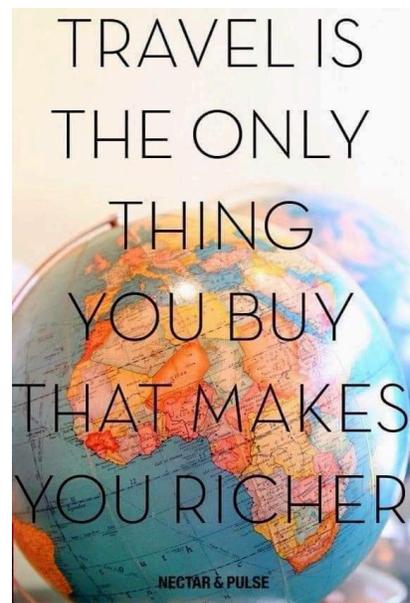
## My FFI

The members-only portal, [my.friendshipforce.org](https://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 2026!

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



## [2026 CLUB GROUP JOURNEYS](#)

## [2026 INDEPENDENT JOURNEYS](#)



## President's Comments

### Happy International Friendship Day!!

As a Friendship Force club, we're planning to celebrate all our worldwide friendships throughout Friendship Force on Friday, March 13 at Kim Cullinan's home.

***Do you know when, how and why this day was created and celebrated ? I did a little research!***

'Friendship Force's World Friendship Day is observed by Friendship Force International each year on March 1st. **It marks the date the organization was officially established.** Every March 1st is an opportunity to honor the connections that enrich our lives, promote global understanding, bridge cultural divides, and encourage making friends across borders to foster a more peaceful world. ' (Friendship Force International website)

'FFI highlights March 1st, but we also recognize the **UN's International Day of Friendship on July 30th as another**

**opportunity to celebrate the power of connections.** National Friendship Day was originally founded by Hallmark in 1919. It was intended to be a day for people to celebrate their friendship by sending each other cards. **Friendship Day** or **Best Friend's Day**) is an international holiday dedicated to friendship and the celebration of it. Its date varies greatly by country and region. The idea of a World Friendship Day was first proposed on **July 20, 1958** by **Artemio Bracho** during a dinner with friends in Puerto Pinasco, Paraguay. In 1998, **Winnie the Pooh** was named the world's **Ambassador of Friendship** at the United Nations! In April 2011, the United Nations officially designated the first Sunday of August as International Friendship Day. (Wikipedia)

*In Friendship,  
Terese*



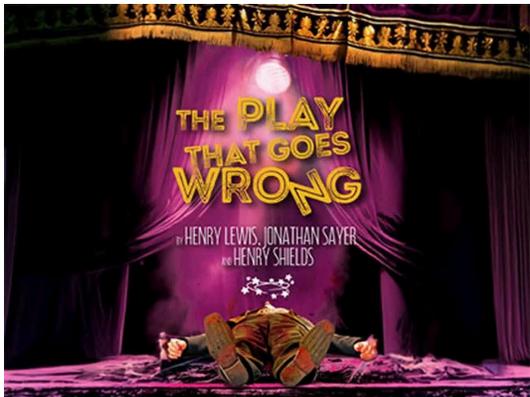
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## Parting Shots

Great time at Jet Blue Park and the home team won! Hurrah!



Many enjoyed the great play at the Florida Rep organized by Carol



## Friendship Force of Southwest Florida

Email Us



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



Try email marketing for free today!