



friendship force  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

## January 2025 Newsletter

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General Meeting & Presentation on  
Sherbrooke, Canada  
Friday, January 10, 2025 at 10:15 am  
Downtown Fort Myers Library  
2450 First Street (near back parking lot)



*News Flash!* For our first meeting of the new year, we are gathering at the downtown Ft Myers Library since our usual location was unavailable. But the good news is afterwards, we are lunching at **The Lodge**, 2278 First Street, one of our favorite places for great BBQ in a funky space with faux mountain views!

Michelle Kemps and Marci Ellis, our journey coordinators will recount all the adventures our club had in their last international trip to Sherbrooke, Canada with pre and post trips to Quebec and Montreal. For those of you who missed going, you will get a report of this fantastic location and all the happened to make it great. For those of you who went on this journey, you'll reminisce about the fun you had! Don't miss out. Call a friend to carpool to Fort Myers.

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## Welcome New Member!

Janice (Jan) Murphy is our first new member of the new year! She is a retired RN and Clinical Manager who currently lives in Punta Gorda. She enjoys knitting and crocheting, water aerobics and is eager to travel with our group. Both Joanne and Linda know her from other clubs in our area and we are so happy that she joined us! You will enjoy getting to know her!

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## 2025 Club Officers and Board Members

Every year our club elects new officers and this year at the Holiday Breakfast it was unanimous for the following 2025 Board.

President - Carol Nasby  
1st Vice P - Terese Libby  
2nd Vice P - Judy Carson  
Treasurer - Richard Collins  
Secretary - Marcia Ellis

In addition, Michelle Kemps agreed to continue maintaining the [club webpage](#); Joanne Collins is continuing to write the newsletter, send emails, maintain club roster and administer [FFI club portal](#) info. Check out our club [Bylaws](#) for info on all things operational (e.g., duties of officers, Journey and Host Coordinators responsibilities, journey reimbursement and more!) We are seeking a Membership Committee Chair and help with Social Events.

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Our January book selection is [The Last Light Over Oslo](#) by Alix Rickloff. This is the story of the Nazi invasion of Norway in 1940 and the escape and the involvement of the American ambassador to Norway. Just a fascinating read! Reserve it today at your local library and join the discussion on January 28 at Marci Ellis' home at 10 am.



**Are you ready?**  
**Winnipeg Canada FF arriving here**  
**February 17-23, 2025**

Sue Linehan, our Host Coordinator, is traveling. She said as soon as she gets home after January 8th, she will finalize the schedule and will send out details by the middle of January.

One of the fun events she is planning for the ambassadors is a trip to Florida Rep Theater for a 2 pm Wednesday matinee on February 19th. The play is **Boca**, a series of short intertwining comedies that follow a group of retirees in a fictional retirement community. It has great reviews and is sure to be a fun time.

Sue reserved 30 tickets for our group. We will probably have anywhere between 14-18 tickets available for our club members! This is great because the performance has very few seats available now. If you want a seat, don't hesitate. Just click on [Sue's email](#) today and she will contact you upon her return with details.

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**Reciprocal Meeting**  
**visit Orlando Feb 3-6**  
**host Orlando here March 17-20**

**Marcia Ellis advises that**  
**communication from her will be**  
**forthcoming to ensure the list of**

ambassadors going and hosting is accurate. Look for an email from her soon at [Marci's email](#)



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## Announcing next year's Domestic Outbound Journey to Napa Sonoma Valley FF Club

**Change of date October 3-8, 2025**  
with pre-trip at Crater Lake National Lodge



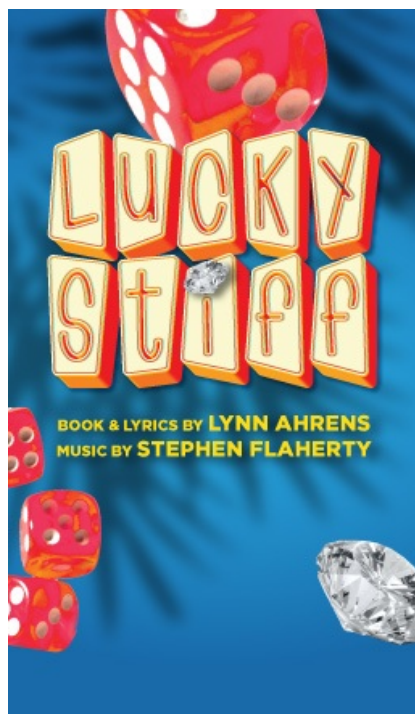
Our journey coordinator, **Terese Libby**, advises that the dates have changed for our exciting outbound to California's gorgeous Napa Sonoma Valley to **October 3-8**. The pre-trip to reservation for Crater Lake is okay with **October 1 and 2nd** dates.

From their club's post on FFI, "visits to the Napa and Sonoma wine growing valleys to views of our rugged Pacific Ocean coast, we try to give you a taste of our varied activities and landscape. The Sonoma Mission is the furthest north in California, there are 300+ft redwood trees as well as the World Class Charles M. Schultz museum and fun

towns to explore in between. Our farm to table cuisine is a treat and there are beer gardens, olive oil tastings and port makers, too! We are happy to share the bounty of our counties with you!"

The trip is limited to 12 ambassadors and she is now taking "Waiting List" applicants. If you think you want to be on the Waiting List, please click on [Terese's email](#) and let her know you are interested. Terese has booked rooms at [National Park Lodge at Crater Lake](#) for those who told her they are interested in the pre-trip and is planning a tour of some of the other sites around the vicinity.

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## Florida Rep Theatre Matinee with Lunch Saturday, January 25, 2025

Join Carol and fellow club members for a hilarious play, *Lucky Stiff*, at a Saturday Matinee at the Florida Repertory Theater. The play is a musical comedy about a dead person who wins the lottery, and the ensuing chaos. It should be a hoot!

We may have some extra tickets, so if interested, contact Carol. Ticket price is \$57. We will have lunch before the play at Bruno's of Brooklyn Italian Eatery on First Street in Ft Myers - or just join us for lunch. **Fun, fun, fun!**

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## Valentine's Day Fun on Feb 14th

Our Valentine Wine tasting event on February 14th at 1:00 will have *1/2 of the members bringing a wine* from somewhere around the world, preferably a white or sparkling wine.

*And 1/2 of the members bringing crackers, cheese, fruits, nuts, and chocolates* . This should lead to a scrumptious afternoon of fun. Non alcoholic wines are possible also.

RSVP to Carol with what you will bring to the gathering at 507-



236-6704 by **Feb 10th**. Or email her by clicking on [Carol](#). Members can also sign up for what they will bring at the January meeting.

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**January 25** - Theater outing to Florida Repertory matinee show with optional lunch before the show. Cost is \$57. Contact and pay Carol.

**January 28** - Book Club at Marci Ellis' home, 10 am, Please read *The Last Light Over Oslo* by Alix Rickloff. This is story of Nazi invasion of Norway in 1940 and the escape and involvement of the American ambassador to Norway.

**February 3 - 6** - Many club members will travel to Orlando to meet and stay with one of their club members for a fabulous reciprocal visit!

**February 14** - Valentine Event at Carol's Home, a wine tasting from around the world at 1 pm with a chocolate, crackers, cheese, fruit and nuts.

**\*\*February 17-23** - All Hands on Deck to help with Winnipeg Canada Inbound\*\* Block off your calendar to host or help in some way. It takes EVERYONE to pull off a great welcome to our club!

**March 14** - World Friendship Force Pot Luck - Lovely home of Cheryle Phelps & Lou Rizk, 9035 Prosperity Way, Ft Myers, FL 33913

**March 17 - 20** - Part 2 of Reciprocal Visit, this time we host and welcome Orlando Club members.

**April 18** - General Meeting and Program on Visiting Fabulous India - presenter to be determined at North Fort Myers Library with luncheon to follow.

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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](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 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](#)

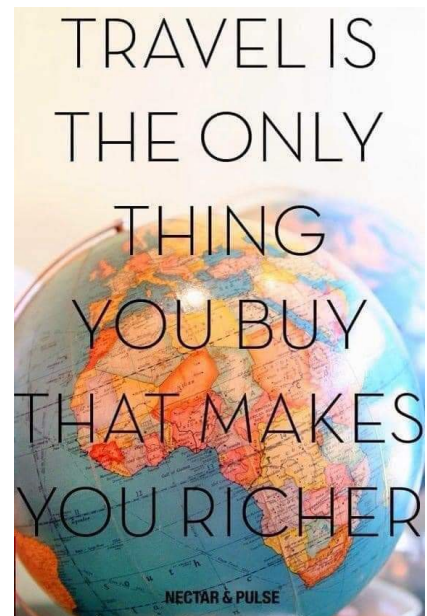
[2024-2025 INDEPENDENT JOURNEYS](#)

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### President's Comments



We lost a great Friendship Force advocate with the death of President Jimmy Carter.





The above photo was taken of President Carter when he visited Norththumberland England with the Friendship Force group in 1979.

He became a strong advocate for Friendship Force, along with his good friend Wayne Smith. They are the founding fathers of our club.

The woman who hosted Jimmy Carter and Rosalind told BBC recently that she has very fond memories of that time. He visited a cricket game, went jogging with her husband and visited the local pub to have pint. He loved being there and “living like a local” which is the essence of our club’s motto.

This trip was the very first FF journey to another FF club. After that, he met with US governors, and he urged each state to start FF clubs to build friendships around the world.

Today there are over 300 journeys a year to over 60 countries on 6 continents, with over 15,000 members enjoying “living like locals” as they explore the world.

*Rest in Peace President Carter.*

**Job well done!**



# Peace, Carol

## Parting Shots

Everyone enjoyed Christmas Breakfast at the Isles Yacht Club, the Christmas Coffee at Carol's and all the season's festivities. Here's a few shots...



Jean Grady, Hank & Maureen Butt and Lori & Bob Rice waited for the gang to arrive



Bev Haggarty



Lou Rizk



Kim Cullinan



Dianne Gooding



Dennis Haggarty



Richard Collins



Priscilla McShane



Joanne Collins



Bob Rice



Chris Nasby



Jack Cooley





Lori, Grinch, Joanne and Carol at Peace River Gardens

## Friendship Force of Southwest Florida



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