



friendship force
GREATER DES MOINES



President's Message

Hello Friendship Force Members and Friends,

What a year 2020 has been! The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in the worst health crisis in American History which has devastated our economy and caused us to change our whole way of life. I hope that you and your family and friends are well and safe. I have had several relatives and friends who have suffered with this terrible virus. I am sure that you also know of people who have had the virus. We are still living carefully and cautiously. Will this become our new normal? I hope not. At least, we have our cherished memories of previous years and we can look forward to future travels and celebrations. Thank goodness for technology because even though we have not been able to meet in person too many times this year, we have been able to conduct board meetings, have book club discussions, and hold activity committee meeting via Zoom. Because of the internet, we have been able to keep our Friendship Force moving forward, conduct business, and communicate with each other.



What a strange moment of time we have found ourselves in. Many of our activities have been canceled, changed, or hampered by restrictions. As a result, we have had the opportunity to stretch our imaginations and come up with activities that fit in to the protocols of the pandemic. Our president, Pat Headley came up with the brilliant Idea of having outdoor small group meetings. Friendship Force members stepped up and volunteered to host these meetings. These outdoor events allowed members to interact with other members, have some fun, and learn more about some of the people in our club. To keep us connected and engaged, club members visited several gardens, spent time at the Art Center, held our annual meeting in a park with a picnic, visited the zoo and a pumpkin patch, and toured Terrace Hill.

2020 has been full of many challenges. This pandemic has forced us to adapt to a new way of life. It's very easy to get discouraged and to let this discouragement lead to giving up or burning out or just being depressed. But this can be prevented or eased if we try hard to have a positive attitude and perspective. What we must do is learn one thing – how to hope. Hope to be able to eat at our favorite restaurants, hope to attend a play or concert, hope to walk around at a farmer's market or spend time at a festival or winery, hope to travel somewhere besides the grocery store, hope for a vaccine that will eventually allow us to have our lives back. The future depends on what we do in the present. So, wear a mask, wash your hands often, avoid crowds, and pray and hope for a better tomorrow. When this pandemic is behind us and really over, let's have a big party, burn or bury our masks and have a Givingthanks dinner with St Patrick, Easter, 4th July, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's decoration.

In Friendship, peace, and hope,
Ginny Renda
FFGDM Co-President

FFI News

Notes from the Regional Leadership Zoom Meeting

Fundraising – Worldwide, FFI has raised \$500,000 which should see the organization through 2021, by which time we may be able to resume journeys.

Journeys – These are still on hold until at least the 2nd or 3rd quarter of 2021. We have requested our outbound journeys for 2022 and should get the results by early spring of 2021. Note – we have asked to reschedule some of the journeys cancelled in 2021.

Club Fees – FFI is working on a new fee structure to “simplify the fees so they are easier to understand and implement for member retention and recruitment, while maintaining financial stability”. The new fee structure will be introduced widely to members by 2022 although testing in select markets will begin in 2021.

On-Line Membership Access – This tool, when implemented, will help members all over the world connect with each other. It is in the testing phase right now with an all-member roll out in February.

Activities – FFI has been busy providing lots of virtual activities. Their website at www.thefriendshipforce.org is chock full of information and virtual activities. You’ll find some of the following: virtual journeys, pen pal program, learning space, photography and cooking lessons, painting lessons, trivia quizzes, and faces & places. All these things can be enjoyed in real time or after the event. They are all taped so you can click on any one of them when you have the time to enjoy them.

FFI eNewsletter - You can receive their newsletter as a member of FFGDM. Go to www.thefriendshipforce.org and click on *News & Updates*. Under the FFI logo on the right, find *Important Links*, and under that click on the *August* newsletter. At the very bottom of that newsletter click on *Join our Newsletter*. Fill out the form and hit submit. You will soon be receiving the newsletter, notices of upcoming journeys, and other general news.

Training – FFI will soon be offering “Zoom and WhatsApp” Training. Stay tuned.

– Pat Headley
FFGDM CO-President

Club Activities

Terrace Hill Decked Out for the Holidays



Sharon, Gerry, Marla, Alice, Deanne.

Members and their guests toured Terrace Hill on Saturday, December 5, in socially distancing groups of six each. The governor’s mansion was decorated for the holiday season as only an historic mansion can be. The annual Holiday Tea was postponed for a year, but Terrace Hill was still well worth visiting, and for some of our guests, it was their first time.



Ginny, Chrystal, Pat, Ellie, Nikki, Janette, Anita

Blank Park Zoo Visit

Members had a perfect sunny day at the Blank Park Zoo on November 5. They started with sack lunches and then progressed through the various sections of the park that were still open. Favorite animals included the Japanese Macaques, especially the sweet little baby, Wallabies, and Lions.

We also saw the professional dismantling and loading of the Carousel into a semi-trailer truck. It's then taken to a large property near St Louis for storage until spring.



Isabella, Pat Polly Ginny, and Pat at the Zoo



Nancy, Alice, Dee, Anita, and Elaine at the Zoo

Book Friends

On November 23, Book Friends met to discuss the book, *Cross Currents*, by John Shors. We were able to have John Shors on the Zoom call with us to get his perspective of the book. He also gave us some insight into how he works. A big thank you to Mary Marshall for organizing John's participation. She's traveled with him several times on his group tours that visit the locations of his books.

The December book was "The Warmth of Other Suns" by Isabel Wilkerson. It's about African American Migration to the North.

The Friendship Force Book Club meets the fourth Monday of each month. Any Friendship Force member who would like to join the book club, contact me nihubbard@aol.com. - Nikki Hubbard, Book Friends Chair

2021 Selections

DATE	TITLE	AUTHOR	MEMBER	NOTES
January	Pachinko	Min Jin Lee	Anita Lindfield	Korea & Japan
February	Each member brings a book to recommend and summarize			
March	Murder in an Irish Pub	Charlene O'Connor	Ginny Renda	Mystery in Ireland
April	Daughter of the Reich	Louise Fein	Alice Rasmussen	Germany
May	The Unlikely Adventures of the Sherrill Sisters	Balli Kaur Jaswall	Connie Walters	India
June	The Magical Strings of Frankie Presto	Mitch Albom	Nikki Hubbard	World travels
July	Next Year in Havana	Chanel Cleeton	Ronda Davis	Cuba
August	Temple of a Thousand Faces	John Shors	Mary Marshall	Angkor Wat
September	My Dear Hamilton	Stephanie Dray & Laura Kamoie	Ginny Renda	U.S.A.
October	Each member brings a book to recommend and summarize			
November	Beantown Girls	Jane Healey	Alice Rasmussen	WWII Red Cross
December	Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper	Phaedra Patrick	Nikki Hubbard	World travels

Friendship Force Walking Club



The Walking Club has been a small but mighty band of walkers under the leadership of Cathy Jensen and Mary Marshall. If you would like to join them, especially when the weather improves in the spring, you can sign up for their list at dpmmgm@msn.com or skyhicathy@q.com.

Happy Feet Donations



Even during a pandemic, our FF club knows how to warm the feet and hearts of our downtown homeless community. We thank all club members for your wonderful generosity in donating 301 pairs of socks and some warm gloves that were delivered to the Central Iowa Shelter. This year, socks were collected quickly at the expertly planned annual meeting at the Fort Des Moines county park. Although our Happy Feet Holiday Luncheon was cancelled due to the virus, your giving spirit and kindness were not! Thank you, thank you everyone!

– Karen Kilpatrick
Happy Feet Coordinator

Membership News



THANK YOU to everyone who has sent in their renewals for 2021. For those who have not yet sent in their 2021 membership, this is a reminder that it is due! Please use the form on the last page of this newsletter and send it to the address on the form.

I know that this year has not been a great year for gathering together, but next year will be better and you don't want to miss out. If I do not hear from you soon, I will be calling you! If you have any questions, please call me at 515-865-6331.

--- Alice Rasmussen
Membership Chair



Carol Grant - January 1
Barbara Bailey - January 20
Charlotte Buttin - January 24
Carol Corrigan - January 26
Del Wynn - January 29
and 95 years Young
Doris Andre - February 7

Show & Tell

We all need good news so let's do Show & Tell. If you have photos of your personal milestones or want to brag on a child or grandchild, please send your news (photo optional) to shelleybain@centurylink.net.



This is Sky (Sky Dancer's Dream)

Winter will not be as long with him to keep me company. Started puppy training although Shih Tzus are not known for being very trainable. – Barbara Bailey

| thought | wanted a
career.

Turns out | just want a
paycheck to buy plane
tickets.

2021 FFDGM Board and Committee Chairs

<i>Board Members</i>	<i>Term ends</i>	<i>Email</i>
Pat Headley – <i>Co-President</i>	2023	headleypatricia651@gmail.com
Ginny Renda – <i>Co-President</i>	2023	grpbears@aol.com
Mary Marshall - <i>Vice-President</i>	2021	dpmmgm@msn.com
Janette House - <i>Secretary</i>	2021	j.house@mediacombb.net
Barbara Bailey – <i>Treasurer</i>	2023	dcblbailey@gmail.com
Marla Carr – <i>Activities Committee Co-Chair</i>	2022	marlakcarr@yahoo.com
Mike Davis – <i>Journey Director</i>	2021	mjdavisconsulting@gmail.com
Gail Sheridan Lucht	2022	gail.lucht@gmail.com
Connie Walters	2022	yourfriendconnie@gmail.com
<i>Other Committees and Tasks</i>		
Shelley Bain – <i>Newsletter Editor</i>		shelleybain@centurylink.net
Nikki Hubbard – <i>Book Friends Coordinator</i>		nihubbard@aol.com
Nancy Lundstrom – <i>Activities Committee Co-Chair</i>		nancylundstrom@mchsi.com
Cookie Major – <i>Community Service Coordinator</i>		cookster50@gmail.com
Alice Rasmussen – <i>Membership Chair</i>		off4ever@aol.com
Cathy Jensen – <i>FF Walking Club Coordinator</i>		skyhicathy@q.com.

Travel Tips

5 Worst Mistakes You Can Make in Booking Airfare or Hotels

Author: The Traveling Professor/ February 27, 2018

Here are the worst mistakes you can make when booking airfare or hotels:

Booking Airfares on Expedia or Orbitz: Airfares should not be booked anywhere but directly with the airline. When travelers book with non-airline websites they are not always notified of changes and when travelers need to make changes or cancellations on their own then they'll need to go back to their online booking site. If flights are changed or cancelled due to weather or other issues, the passengers who booked directly with the airline are taken care of first, those who booked with another site are pushed to the side. There is really no price advantage for booking on a site like Expedia or Orbitz. Make sure to always book airfares directly with the airline.

Booking a Flight Connecting through LHR: It often takes half an hour to get from one terminal to another, security is excruciatingly detailed, and the long lines test the patience of any traveler.

Booking Super-Budget Airlines: WOW and Spirit airlines come to mind. In the long run, after adding in all the fees, they are not budget flights any longer. The customer service can be horrible, even by airline standards.

Using a Credit Card without Travel Benefits: Always use a credit card that provides at least trip cancellation/interruption insurance and if going overseas, provides emergency health and evacuation benefits.

Booking Hotels on a Travel Website: Hotels pay as much as 20% commission to sites like Expedia and Orbitz. Book directly with hotels and get better terms such as early check-in, breakfast, etc. Sometimes it's even better to phone the hotel to get a better deal. Another mistake of booking a hotel on a travel website is that you may not get the benefits of being in that hotel's rewards programs

Mail membership application and check to: FFGDM, PO Box 13136, Des Moines, IA 50310

Email _____ Birthday MM and DD for newsletter _____ / _____

[illegible]

<input type="checkbox"/> Activities Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Journey Coordinator	<u>Inbound Journeys activities</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Board Member (future)	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Editor	<input type="checkbox"/> Day Hosting
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographer	<input type="checkbox"/> Farewell Party Team
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Speakers	<input type="checkbox"/> Speaker's Bureau	<input type="checkbox"/> Host Coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Audit	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Hosting
<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer (future)	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Team
<input type="checkbox"/> Greeter at events	<input type="checkbox"/> Website	<input type="checkbox"/> Small Dinner Hosting
<input type="checkbox"/> Historical/Archiving	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Welcome Party Team

Please list a skill or interest you have, not listed above, that you are willing to share.

6 | Page