



friendship force
GREATER DES MOINES



2023 FFGDM Calendar

(Dates and activities subject to change)

July 5	Lunch Friends
July 14	Bastille Day Fête, page 1
July 20	Table of Friends
July 22	Art Center Tour & Lunch, page ?
July 24	Book Friends
Aug 1 or 2	Lunch Friends
Aug 17	Table of Friends
Aug 27	Sundaes on Sunday, page ?
Aug 28	Book Friends
Sept 5 or 6	Lunch Friends
Sept 17-27	FF Leuven outbound journey
Sep 25	Book Friends
Sep 28	Table of Friends
Oct 2 – 5	FFI Conference, Dubrovnik, Croatia
Oct 3 or 4	Lunch Friends
Oct 11-16	FF Tallahassee inbound journey
Oct 19	Table of Friends
Oct 23	Book Friends
Nov TBD	Annual Meeting
Nov 1 or 7	Lunch Friends
Nov 16	Table of Friends
Nov 27	Book Friends
Dec 5	Happy Feet Lunch
Dec TBD	Lunch Friends
Dec 18	Book Friends
Dec 21	Table of Friends



Have you checked out our Facebook page?

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendshipForceGreaterDesMoines/>

Alliance Française of Central Iowa
and
Des Moines Sister Cities Commission
invites you and your friends . . .



Bastille Day Fête

Friday, July 14

5:00 – Doors open

5:30 – Brief program
Dinner

Ding Darling Shelter
Birdland Park
2100 Saylor Road * Des Moines

The celebration will include a pétanque tournament, French accordion music, and lots of food. There will be prizes for the best French appetizer, side, and dessert so be sure to enter yours in the contest.

The Alliance will provide roast pork, baguettes, and tableware. We hope you'll bring your enthusiastic selves and a dish to share. You may bring beer or wine in non-glass containers.

Questions? Shelley at
shelleybain@centurylink.net

President's Message



Dear FFGDM Members,

The second quarter of 2023 provided Friendship Force members with several opportunities to learn along with having fun. On May 2, twelve of our members traveled to Tallahassee, Florida for a remarkably interesting journey. {see newsletter article.} At the end of May some members did a walkabout at the CelebrAsian Festival. We had some excellent food and enjoyed visiting the many ethnic booths. On June 7th, we held the first meeting of the newly formed Lunch Club. If you would like to join our Lunch Club, contact coordinator Christine McQuillan at 1ordmco@gmail.com. On June 14, Friendship Force members spent an enjoyable afternoon at a Cub's Game. Thank You Cathy Jensen and Nancy Lundstrom for arranging this entertaining afternoon. Fifteen members participated in the annual All-Iowa Friendship Force Picnic in Ames on June 24th.

We are now looking forward to Bastille Day at Ding Darling Shelter House on July 14th, a trip to the Art Center on July 22nd, and Sundays on Sunday at Crown Point on August 24th. I hope to see you at some of these events.

We have big plans for the fall of 2023, particularly from the 11th to the 17th of October. I hope you will keep these dates open and, on your calendar, because this is when FF Tallahassee is coming to Des Moines. You might wonder why we are having a journey in the middle of October when there could be challenges with the weather. The answer is that members of the Tallahassee Club wanted very much to come to Des Moines to see the fall colors, the change of seasons, and attend the Madison County Covered Bridge Festival.

More information about the activities for the Tallahassee Journey will be in the next newsletter. You will be invited to attend most of the activities, and I hope that you will volunteer to help. We will need "all hands on deck" to have a successful journey for our friends from Tallahassee. Participating in an inbound journey is a fantastic opportunity to get involved in our Friendship Force club, so I hope that you will volunteer to help. Volunteers are the backbone of a happy, healthy, connected, organization. Without volunteers, our Friendship Force Club would not exist!

In Peace and Friendship,
Ginny Renda
President FFGDM

Journey Report

Tallahassee Outbound Report by Lenne Orona, Ambassador Coordinator

Our journey to the Tallahassee club was filled with information we all found amazing. In the area, we visited plantations learning that a plantation is not just for growing cotton but rather, tenant farming, and a place just to hunt and grow timber. Many have been turned over to the state to preserve the rich heritage that created them and as education training grounds. Each plantation has a vision to establish or finish memorials to the enslaved past as a healing and learning tool.

We were welcomed on May 2 with a lovely potluck dinner and then treated to a Handbell concert at one of the Tallahassee club members' community center.

...continued



On May 3, we spent a full day exploring the Goodwood Plantation and the Old and New Capital Complexes. The old capital stands right behind the new one as voters of the state refused to let the old one be torn down. We witnessed a mostly peaceful demonstration at Governor DeSantis office, with some being taken away by police by refusing to leave when the building closed. A visit to the Korean War Memorial finished out the afternoon.



Goodwood Plantation, also known as Old Croom Mansion, was a medium sized cotton plantation of about 1675 acres, established by Hardy Bryan Croom. The land was originally part of an 1824—23,000-acre land grant to the Marquis De Lafayette for his service to the nation during the Revolutionary

War. Today the grounds cover 19 acres, with the plantation added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1972. The home is filled with original family furniture, porcelain and textiles, very many personal effects of this family.



Thursday found us visiting Tall Timbers a quail hunting plantation located in northern Leon County Fla, established by Edward Beadel in 1895. It is recognized as the home of the study of fire ecology and is an advocate to protect the right to use prescribed fire for land management. In the Red Hills landscape, the primary research focus is the ecology and



management of fire-dependent ecosystems, and its wildlife, including bobwhite quail, in the Southeastern



Coastal Plain. Reforestation through controlled burns, identifying and providing haven to endangered bird species, a participant in the Feral Swine Control program is among the many habitat programs they offer. Tall Timbers heads a project to reclaim habitat for the Bob White Quail in other states by educating people and then translocation of the quail. We did a wagon tour of the property to see the positive results of a controlled burn. . .



For the entire report and additional photos, please go to the FFGDM website.

Journeys



2024 Journeys

We have our matches from FFI for 2024. This was a good year for us. We have not had an international inbound journey in recent years due to the pandemic, so the Saitama, Japan inbound is welcome. These journeys are tentative until contacts are made and dates are confirmed. And there's more—FF Kansas has invited us for a 2024 outbound to Wichita!

FF Xalapa Veracruz Mexico outbound (April)
FF Southern Oregon outbound (August)

FF Saitama Japan inbound (October)
FF Kansas (Wichita) outbound (date tbd)

We will need coordinators to lead the planning of the journeys. If you are interested in serving as Ambassador Coordinator for an outbound to Xalapa, Southern Oregon, or Wichita or a Host Coordinator for the inbound from Japan, please ask me for an application at mjdavisconsulting@gmail.com or 515-491-1954. We will provide training, templates, other materials, and mentoring to help you be a coordinator. Remember that the ambassador and host coordinators receive stipends.

--- Mike Davis, Journey Director

A little about our matches...



Xalapa is the capital of Veracruz in Mexico. It is a college town that enjoys some fine colonial architecture as well as a nice climate in the highlands above the hot and humid Veracruz coast. Xalapa is known as the "Athens of Veracruz" because of the strong cultural influence of its major university, Universidad Veracruzana. Culturally, Xalapa has a wide variety of events associated with its theatres, museums, and street art. Many musicians and dancers frequently perform in the town center on special occasions or celebrations. Art has a keen following in Xalapa. The gallery, Pinacoteca Diego Rivera, has the largest collection of Diego Rivera's paintings in all of Mexico.

Oregon is divided north to south by the Cascade Mountains, and east to west at the end of the large and fertile Willamette Valley. FF Southern Oregon is in the southwest corner of Oregon, just above California along the I-5 corridor. The club is located in the Rogue River Valley containing the larger towns of Medford, Ashland and Grants Pass.



Saitama is the capital and the most populous city of Saitama Prefecture, Japan. Being in the Greater Tokyo Area and lying 15 to 30 kilometers north of central Tokyo, many of its residents commute into Tokyo. As of 2021, the city had an estimated population of 1,324,854.

Wichita began as a trading post on the Chisholm Trail in the 1860s and became a destination for cattle drives traveling north from Texas to Kansas railroads, earning it the nickname "Cowtown". In the 1920s and 1930s, aircraft companies landed in Wichita, including Beechcraft, Cessna, and Stearman Aircraft and the city became an aircraft production hub. The city is similar in size to Des Moines and has much to offer.



Activities



Des Moines Art Center Tour & Lunch

Saturday, July 22

11 am – Docent-led tour

12:15 pm – Lunch at
Tangerine

4700 Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50312

Current exhibits:

“Rembrandt and His World”

*features examples of the artist’s
iconic self-portraits, biblical scenes,
and pictures of everyday life,
alongside those of his
contemporaries.*

“Underneath Everything:
Humility and Grandeur in
Contemporary Ceramics”

*celebrates the robust ceramics
tradition in Iowa, featuring work by
artists with local connections
alongside those working nationally
and internationally.*

RSVP

if attending, by July 17 to Gail
at gail.lucht@gmail.com
or text 515-210-0301.



Sundaes on Sunday and Community Service

Sunday, August 27

1:00 – 3:00 pm

Crown Point Community Center
6300 Pioneer Pkwy, Johnston 50131

Join your Friendship Force friends for a cool summer activity – Sundaes on Sunday. The Activities Committee will provide the ice cream and you bring your favorite topping to share such as caramel sauce, coconut, pecans, strawberries, or other fruit.

We’ll also collect donations of cash, check, or needed items for

Bidwell Riverside Center



Bidwell was established in 1893. It has a history of dedication to improving the lives of the poor and children in particular by providing life-changing assistance to individuals and families in central Iowa. It has recently partnered with Hawthorne Hill. *More history* [here](#).

The most needed items are:

Shampoo	Laundry detergent	Canned vegetables
Body soap	Dawn dish soap	Canned fruit
Toothpaste	Toilet paper	Canned meats
Toothbrushes	Paper towels	Peanut butter
Deodorant	Garbage bags – 13 gallon	Soup

RSVP, If attending, by Aug 20 to Janette at j.house@mediacombb.net.

Bring a friend or two!

CelebrAsian Walkabout

Pat Westphal coordinated a walking group through the CelebrAsian Festival on Saturday, May 27.

CelebrAsian is one of the vibrant ethnic festivals in Des Moines. Visitors can explore an amazing 15 villages bursting with authentic food, culture, and history including Nepalese, Hmong, Indian, Japanese, Chinese, and Laotian.

CelebrAsian demonstrates how rich and varied Asian culture is in Central Iowa and how Asians have contributed to our community. Our group is fortunate to be able to experience it.

Sunny weather, nice breeze, and friends

Eighteen FFGDM members and guests enjoyed a “picture perfect” day at Principle Park ball park on Wednesday, June 14! The Iowa Cubs played the Indianapolis Indians with “Cubbies” winning 8-1 with lots of activity on the field.

We had some “new-bees” at the game, sang along in the 7th inning stretch, ate hot dogs and popcorn (need to bring your own “cracker jacks” now-a-day)! We also celebrated “Flag Day” with our own flag sticks, red/blue wristbands, and solved the baseball trivia handed out to all.

--- Nancy Lundstrom, co-coordinator



All-Iowa Friendship Force Picnic

Friendship Force of Central Iowa (Ames) hosted the annual All-Iowa FF Picnic at Homewood Golf Course Clubhouse on June 24 with catering was by Hickory Park. Our club was well-represented with 17 attending.



FFCI planned a lively ice breaker before the buffet and the Presidents spoke after. We learned of their journeys for this year and recent activities including FFCR's trip to Australia and New Zealand, FFCI's journey to Missoula MT, and FFQC's ambassadors from Long Island NY. Next year the Iowa FF clubs will meet in Cedar Rapids.

Special Interest Groups

Performing Arts Club – *Our Newest Club!*

Our newest club was created to allow members who are interested in the performing arts to share information about local arts events and find similarly minded members to attend the events with them. The club has been embraced by a small group of art lovers and welcomes more.

In the first month, members attended three excellent Zenith Chamber Music concerts, *The Play That Goes Wrong* at the Ankeny Community Theatre, and the Des Moines Storytellers Project: Travel. An excellent start!

If you are interested in joining, contact Pat Westphal, PAC Coordinator, at WestphalP@central.edu.

Lunch Friends

The purpose of the Lunch Friends group is to have a lunch group similar to Table of Friends. Members of Lunch Friends (*final name TBD*) to be take turns deciding where to dine and taking reservations. I've volunteered to coordinate this group.



Our first lunch took place at El Patron Mexican restaurant. It was a delightful lunch shared by seven wonderful individuals. We enjoyed fantastic food (salsa, chimichangas, and fajitas) and fun conversations, particularly revolving around our travel stories and the interesting encounters we've had in airports and on airplanes. We are looking forward to trying more cultural cuisines and other great lunch spots.

Our next lunch is Wednesday, July 5, at 11:30 am at the Hibachi Grill & Supreme Buffet in West Des Moines. The



August lunch will take place at St. Kilda Collective in Valley Junction, with a date (August 1 or 2) to be confirmed by the group at the July lunch.



If you would like to join our lunch group and be informed about our upcoming lunches, please email me at 1ordmco@gmail.com. Remember, our gatherings are open to anyone who enjoys delicious food, engaging conversations, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Feel free to invite your friends and family to join us. The more, the merrier!

--- Christine McQuillan, Lunch Friends Coordinator

The only thing better than lunch is lunch with friends.

Table of Friends



In May, Dee Willemsen hosted 10 members who dined on authentic Salvadorian fare at La Cuscatleca on Fleur Drive. We all tried Pupusa, the dish most commonly associated with Salvadorian cuisine and La Cuscatleca's claim to fame. Pupusa is described as a thick tortilla stuffed with cheese and various combinations of ingredients. Delicious! Favorite entrées included Pollo a la Crema and Carne Asada.

Eight members joined host Marla Carr at The Hills Bar & Grill in Pleasant Hill in June. This restaurant has a varied menu, and the appetizers, burgers, and drinks were popular.



For July 20, Ginny Renda has selected District 36 | Wine Bar & Grill in Ankeny. For August 17, Carmie Renda invites us to her home for one of her delicious homemade Italian dinners. Who can resist these offers?

We meet the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm unless that date conflicts with other FF activities. Let me know if you would like to join the group. ---- Shelley Bain, TOF Coordinator, shelleybain@centurylink.net

People who love to eat are always the best people. – Julia Child

Book Friends

Book Friends meets the 4th Monday of each month (except December), usually at 3:00 pm at Northwest Community Center or Gray's Lake Park. **Join Us!** We are open to all Friendship Force members and their friends. The only membership requirement is a love of books.

Contact coordinator Connie Walters at yourfriendconnie@gmail.com or 515-971-1916.

2023 Selections

Discussion DATE	TITLE	AUTHOR	HOST	NOTES
July 24	The Last Green Valley	Mark T. Sullivan	Ginny	Ukraine
Aug 28	The Personal Librarian	M. Benedict & V.C. Murray	Dee	African American
Sep 25	Lessons in Chemistry	Bonnie Garmus	Nikki	Gender Equality
Oct 23	<i>Member Recommendations For 2024</i>			Cultural Perspectives
Nov 27	Honolulu	Alan Brennert	Polly	Hawaiian immigrants
Dec 18	The Birchbark House	Louise Erdrich	Connie	Native American Ojibwe

Member News

Our Sympathy

to the family and friends of



Barbara Bailey
1946 - 2023



New Members

Nina Dahl
4326 Hickman Road #311
Des Moines, IA 50310
605-838-9343
denitadahl@gmail.com

Mary Jo Healey
2507 Emma Ave
Des Moines, IA 50321
515-360-4378
maryjo.healey@marinecu.com



Marilynn Wedden - July 5
John Tone - July 6
Lori Slings - July 8
Charlotte Dozoryst – July 9
Ron Munsinger – July 9
Lavonne Neerland – July 10
Nancy Grandquist Fields – July 20
Alice Rasmussen – July 20
Susan Stroope – July 21
Sharon Dunkin – July 24
Faith Hewitt – August 7
Gene Lucht – August 9
Jean Vesely – August 10
Charlie Johnson – August 28
Dee Willemsen - August 28

With a sad heart, I share with you the passing of our friend Barbara Bailey. Not only was she a good friend and social instigator, she served as vice president and treasurer of our Friendship Force club. Barbara left this earth Friday, June 2, surrounded by her loving family. She died of an aggressive form of pancreatic cancer.

I know that I speak for the entire club when I say that her death has left a very real void that will never be entirely filled. Our only consolation is the knowledge that we were privileged to know and work with Barbara. Barbara was a person of intelligence and integrity and she was always willing and anxious to help. She will be greatly missed.

Her beloved dogs Skye and Hamish have been adopted by Board member Darlene Blake. The link to Barbara's obituary is [here](#).
--- Ginny Renda

2023 FFDGM Board Members & Committee Chairs

Board Members	Email	Term ends
Ginny Renda – <i>President</i>	rendaginny@gmail.com	2023*
<i>Vice-President - open</i>		
<i>Treasurer - open</i>		
Janette House - <i>Secretary</i>	j.house@mediacombb.net	2025
Pat Headley – <i>past co-President</i>	headleypatricia651@gmail.com	2023*
Mike Davis – <i>Journey Director</i>	mjdavisconsulting@gmail.com	2024*
Darlene Blake-Beers	darleneblake@hotmail.com	2025
Nikki Hubbard	nihubbard@aol.com	2024
Anita Lindfield	anitalindfield@gmail.com	2024
		*2nd term
Other Committees and Tasks		
Marla Carr – <i>Activities Committee Co-Chair</i>	marlakcarr@yahoo.com	
Nancy Lundstrom – <i>Activities Committee Co-Chair</i>	nancylundstrom@mchsi.com	
Alice Rasmussen – <i>Membership Chair</i>	off4ever@aol.com	
Shelley Bain – <i>Table of Friends Coordinator</i>	shelleybain@centurylink.net	
Christine McQuillen – <i>Lunch Friends Coordinator</i>	1ordmco@gmail.com	
Pat Westphal – <i>Performing Arts Coordinator</i>	WestphalP@central.edu	
Connie Walter – <i>Book Friends Coordinator</i>	yourfriendconnie@gmail.com	
Shelley Bain – <i>Newsletter Editor</i>	shelleybain@centurylink.net	

Where in the World...

... are Mike and Ronda Davis?

On a COVID-delayed cruise of Norway and Iceland



would learn about.

A few years ago, we journeyed to Iceland on a FFI Discovery Journey, along with members from across the country. It was a great journey that focused on the southwest part of the country including the Golden Circle. We got to see northern lights, some usual tourist sites, the city of Reykjavik, as well as sites that few tourists

That journey made us want to see more of Iceland, especially the eastern and northern coastal towns and fjords. We found a cruise that included the west coast of Norway. We flew to Oslo, where we spent three enjoyable days. We then took a train ride through lovely landscape to Bergen, where we stayed two days exploring the wharf and the alleys near it, taking a funicular for splendid views. Then we cruised to fjords (as beautiful as they claim to be) and small towns along the coast. From there, we went to Iceland for several stops. The towns were quaint, the fjords and waterfalls lovely, and the history was interesting. Finally, we spent a day wandering Reykjavik.



--- Mike Davis

FFGDM membership dues cover a calendar year, January 1 through December 31.

Email _____ Birthday MM and DD for newsletter _____ / _____

Check as many as you like, but please check at least one activity you will help with.

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

Your contribution May be tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.