



friendship force

GREATER MILWAUKEE

a world of friends is a world of peace

JULY-AUGUST 2025

www.friendshipforcemilwaukee.org

president's message

Summer greetings!

As the temperature starts to warm up, hopefully your participation in the wealth of opportunities you have with in Friendship Force will also heat up.

Please take the time to review this newsletter, especially the calendar At a Glance on page 2. This is a summary of all the activities that are upcoming. If you enjoy reading, get involved with the Book Club. If eating out is to your liking, participate in a LEO, Let's Eat Out. If you enjoy learning unique and interesting things

about our community and the communities nearby, participate in one of the special activities planned by our Activities Committee. If you enjoy attending a play, sign up to attend the *An Inspector Calls* as part of the Delafield Summer Stage at Lapham Peak State Park.

If you enjoy socializing, make sure you attend a Fifth at Five to get to better know some of your fellow



Dave Loosen

members; there are treats, as well.

I hope everyone marks their calendars to attend our annual picnic on Aug. 20. This is always a great event, and remember our Australia Ambassadors are joining the fun.

Looking ahead to 2026, some exciting journeys are planned. How about being a journey coordinator for the Montana Outbound or Tallahassee Inbound?

Lastly, we have two inbound journeys this summer. One is from Cedar Rapids/Iowa City and the other from Adelaide, Australia. Thanks to those of you who have agreed to be a home host, a day host, or agreed to host a dinner party. There is still a need for day hosts and hosts of dinner parties. Please consider helping where you can. You can contact Chris Vogel for details.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful, safe summer in which you have included Friendship Force activities.

PIG OUT?

ANNUAL PICNIC AUG. 20

The FFGM Annual Picnic will be 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 20. Come and meet our friends from

Adelaide, Australia who are spending the week with us.

This year we are trying a new venue for the picnic: the picturesque Fox Brook Park at 2925 N. Barker Road in Brookfield.

There is a lake with swimming, kayak rental, and fishing available. We will be in Picnic Area #1. Bear right upon entering.

On the menu is a spanferkel pig roast (not roasted on site) plus corn on the cob, creamy coleslaw, red potato salad with dill and meaty baked beans. Yum!

Dessert will be cookies, watermelon and s'mores that we will toast over the fire in the shelter's fireplace. Beverages include bottled water, pop, wine and beer. This feast will be \$23 per person.

Reservations will close Aug. 5, but don't wait to reserve your spot. Please e-mail BOTH Cris Reischl and Dorothy Krupa. Dorothy will invoice you for the price of the meal.



LAM FRIEDRICH

See **PICNIC**, page 3

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at a glance

7/9 Book Club. 1:30 p.m. Brookfield Public Library, 1900 N. Calhoun Rd. *The Art of Losing* (France/Algeria) by Alice Zeniter.

7/15 LEO at 5 p.m. at Odd Duck, 939 S. 2nd St. in Walker's Point. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

7/17 West Bend Day. Museum of Wisconsin Art, 505 Veterans Ave. (\$15 cost allows people to visit for the entire year. Lunch at Riverside Brewery. 255 S. Main St. Tour the jailhouse and courthouse. (\$10)

7/23 6 p.m. meet at Delafield Summer Stage at Lapham Peak State Park for 7:30 p.m. performance of *An Inspector Calls*. Buy tickets, \$15, at summerstageofdelafield.org/an-inspector-calls/. Plan on picnic dinner. R.S.V.P. to Mary Wacker,.

8/4FFGM Board meeting. 6:30 p.m. Zoom.

8/5 Fifth @ 5. Barbara and Joe Geck, 1258 Seitz Dr., Waukesha. R.S.V.P to Barbara.

8/6 LEO at 5 p.m. Three Brothers, 2414 S. St. Clair St., Bayview. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

8/20 Summer picnic, 4:30 p.m., Fox Brook Park, Brookfield, \$23. R.S.V.P. to Cris Reischl, AND Dorothy Krupa, dorothykrupa@me.com.

8/21 Port Washington Day, 10 a.m., 1860 Light Station, 311 N. Johnson St. Lunch at Cavalier Wine Bar, 407 E. Jackson St. \$23. R.S.V.P. **by July 15** to Dorothy Krupa.

2025 Journeys

July 22-26 - Cedar Rapids/Iowa City, IA Mini-Inbound

Aug. 16-23 - Adelaide, Australia, Inbound.

Nov. 11-18 - Baton Rouge, LA Outbound.

2026 Journeys

April TBD - Setouchi Hiroshima, Japan. Outbound.

July TBD - Tallahassee, FL, Inbound.

September TBD - Flathead Valley, Montana, Outbound.

September TBD - Toulouse, France Inbound.

FIFTH @ 5: waukesha

The Fifth @ 5 on Tuesday, Aug. 5, will be hosted by Barbara and Joe Geck at 1258 Seitz Dr., Waukesha. R.S.V.P. to Barbara.

Volunteers are needed for September and November. Mary Hauser and Jerry Randall will host the Oct. 5th @ 5, and the Gecks plan to host again in December.

Hosting a Fifth @ 5 is one of the easiest things you can do. Your FFGM friends come over for a couple of hours, bringing appetizers, desserts, and their own beverages, and you provide plates, napkins, and cups. You can make it a game night, if you wish — or choose a theme.

During winter months, we have been changing the time to earlier in the afternoon. You can also change the date to a Saturday or Sunday closer to the actual 5th of the month.

Please let Barbara Geck when you'd like to host.

JULY 9: book club

The FFGM Book Club will discuss its 50th book at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 9, at the Brookfield Public Library (1900 N. Calhoun Rd.) in the Harnischfeger Room, near the Children's Department. We are meeting in person, not on Zoom, in the nicer weather months. We will discuss *The Art of Losing* (Algeria/France) by Alice Zeniter. Facilitator is Ann Line.

To commemorate this milestone, let's reminisce. Please come prepared to briefly talk about your favorite book or two that we have read. You will be sent a list of the 50 books that we have read since 2017 closer to the meeting date.

The club meets at 1:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months. We read both fiction and non-fiction books that take place in another country or deal with another culture or ethnicity. All FFGM members are encouraged to attend.

Looking ahead: the Sept. 10 book club will meet in person at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Mary Hauser, 10131 W. Nash Ave., Wauwatosa. The book is *Pachinko* (Korea/Japan) by Min Jin Lee. Facilitator is Mary Hauser.

The remaining 2025 book and Book Club date is *Wicked Milwaukee* by Yance Marti (Milwaukee) on Nov. 12 in person at the Brookfield Public Library.

AUG. 21: marine heritage shines in port washington

We're day tripping to Port Washington on Thursday, Aug. 21 for a fun day in this charming city on Lake Michigan. We'll be joined by our ten visitors from Adelaide, Australia, who are participating in an in-bound journey that week.

HURRY! DAY TRIP LIMITED TO FIRST 50

Reservations will close when the limit of 50 is reached. The cost is \$23 per person, which reflects a bequest from Leroy and Joan Bley, residents of Port Washington and long-time members of the Friendship Force of Greater Milwaukee.

The day will kick off at 10 a.m. with a tour of the city's 1860 Light Station, 311 N. Johnson St., on the north bluff overlooking downtown. We'll visit the living quarters of the lighthouse keepers, climb to the lantern room for a fabulous view of the city, and learn about the unique bond between the people of Port Washington and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Lunch will be catered by the Steerage Dining Saloon and served at Cavalier Wine Bar, 407 E. Jackson St. Our Wisconsin-centric menu, served buffet-style, will offer a traditional Friday Fish Fry and German käsespätzle with hand-



Port Washington's historic Light Station offers spectacular views of the city and Lake Michigan.

made spätzle dumplings, roasted vegetables, and cheese. A cash bar will be available.

After lunch, we'll take a leisurely walking tour of the downtown and marina. We'll also visit the Port Washington Historical Society. Afterwards, there will be time for shopping or other fun before you head home.

R.S.V.P. by July 15 to Dorothy Krupa.

RESERVATIONS DUE AUG. 5

PICNIC, *from page 1*

Fox Brook Park is part of the Waukesha County Parks system.

Come and socialize with your FFGM and FF Adelaide friends. There also will be games to play: corn hole, ladder ball, bocce, volleyball . . . and marshmallows to roast for s'mores. Sign up now!

NO NEED TO PAY PARK ENTRANCE FEE

There is a \$7 entrance fee per car at Fox Brook Park, but FFGM will cover the cost.

A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the picnic, and each driver will need to provide his or her name, license plate number, and state of registration. This way, FFGM can pay the fee, and drivers won't have to create a county park account.

We encourage everyone to carpool when possible.

If you have a Waukesha County Park pass (note that this is different from a Wisconsin State Park pass), your entrance fee will be included.

JULY 23: outdoor theater night

With our 11 ambassadors from Cedar Rapids/Iowa City, IA Friendship Force, we'll gather Wednesday, July 23, for a picnic dinner and the play *An Inspector Calls* at the Summer Stage Theater at Lapham Peak State Park, W329 N846 County Highway C, Delafield.

Bring chairs/blankets, food and beverages (snacks, beer, wine and soda are also sold onsite) and meet at the theater on-site box office at 6 p.m. Parking is \$10 (\$3 for seniors) or free with a state park pass. There is a 300-yard walk to the box office, and a free shuttle is available. We can arrange car pooling. You can purchase your tickets (\$15), in advance online (summerstageofdelafield.org/an-inspector-calls/) or at the box office.

We'll set up our chairs, have dinner, and enjoy the park before the 7:30 p.m. performance. See summerstageofdelafield.org/plan-your-visit/ for more information on weather, parking, etc.

Summer Stage Theater writes of *An Inspector Calls*: "Prepare for a gripping night of mystery and suspense! Set in 1912, this thrilling play unravels the secrets of the wealthy Birling family when a mysterious Inspector arrives, investigating the tragic death of a young woman. With its powerful social commentary and masterful storytelling, this production will keep you on the edge of your seat" (summerstageofdelafield.org/wp-content/uploads/SummerStage-2025-Season-Program.pdf).

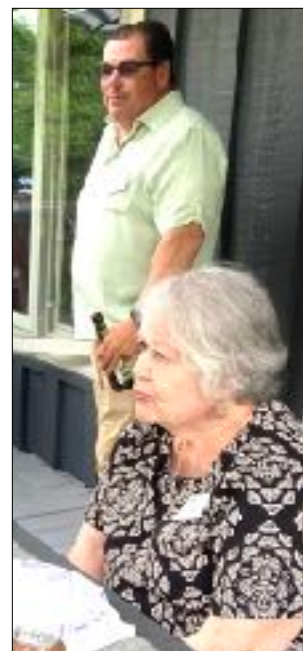
Please text or email Mary Wacker with your name, contact info and whether you'd like to carpool or be a driver/have a state park pass.

fifth @ 5



BEAUTIFUL 5TH @ 5 EVENINGS

A festive Cinco de Mayo-themed evening at Bob and Nancy Mitchell's rural Waukesha home and a warm June 5th @ 5 at Doris and Glenn Mertons' home in peaceful Stone Bank drew good-sized groups and great snacks.



JULY 17: MOWA

The Museum of Wisconsin Art— one of ourstate’s top tourist destinations — is just a short drive away in West Bend.

At 10:30 a.m. Thursday, July 17, we’ll have a docent-led tour of an amazing collection of art at the MOWA, at 205 Veterans Ave. About 1 p.m., we’ll have lunch at Riverside Brewery and Restaurant, 225 Main St.

In this beautiful, well-designed, but not-too-big museum, you will view a solo exhibition by a photographer who is a native northern Wisconsinite and has published in the *NY Times*, the works of a pioneer of the American Pottery Movement, and a Japanese mask collection based on storytelling.

Those are all in addition to the works of many Wisconsin artists you may recognize.



Tickets cost \$15 and include a one-year MOWA membership and area coupons. Note that people with Network Health plans get a free membership — so remember to bring your Network Health Medicare insurance card.

Note: Check-in will go faster if non-MOWA members choose to pre-purchase a MOWA ticket/membership at membership@wisconsinart.org, or call 262-247-2240. FFGM is paying the docent fee. Let Mary Cimbalnik know prior to **July 11** if you are attending this event. Please indicate MOWA and/or lunch so she can reserve correct numbers.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP, LEARN

Home-hosted journeys are at the heart of Friendship Force, and we have two opportunities in 2026 to help. A host coordinator is needed for an inbound journey, likely in July, from Tallahassee, FL. An ambassador coordinator is needed for an outbound journey in early September to Flathead Valley, Montana, a region in the northwestern part of the state, close to Glacier National Park.

Please let Chris Vogel, chrisvogel52@gmail.com, know if you’re interested in leading these journeys. You’ll have help and training!

We hope newer members step forward — to learn to be coordinators, as well as as hosts and ambassadors.

Watch your FFGM newsletters and emails to learn about when and how to sign up for these journeys, as well as the Nov. 11-18, 2025 journey to Baton Rouge, LA, and the April 2026 journey to Setouchi/Hiroshima, Japan.

Also, be sure to check out my.friendshipforce.org to learn about other journeys you may want to join.

member updates

NEW MEMBERS:

Aleda Bourassa

Leta Jung

Patrick Lessila

Donald (Don) Viglia

LEO MOVES TO EVENING FOR JULY, AUGUST

The LEO / Let's Eat Out activity has been quite popular. The most recent lunch on May 29 at McCoco's (Caribbean) drew 22 hungry FFGM members. Although we normally meet for lunch, we are going to try dinner in July and August. Several members have requested dinner in the summer months when we don't need to worry about driving home in the dark. We will make an early 5 p.m. reservation. Are you game?

Tuesday, July 15: ODD DUCK, 939 S. 2nd St. in Walker's Point, at 5 p.m. This restaurant is consistently on the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* Top 25 restaurants in Milwaukee and it is on Yelp's Top 100 Restaurants in the U.S.A. It is known for its innovative and globally inspired shareable small plates. The restaurant will provide separate checks, and there is a 3% surcharge for credit cards.

Wednesday, Aug. 6: THREE BROTHERS, 2414 S. St. Clair St. in Bayview, at 5 p.m. This Serbian restaurant known for its burek is a Milwaukee institution dating back to 1956. It has received a James Beard Award as an "American Classic" and is on *USA Today's* 2025 list as one of the best restaurants in the U.S.A. **Payment is by cash or check.** No credit cards are accepted.

Reminder: The **June 26** LEO (Thursday) is still on for lunch at 12:30 p.m. at SEVEN SWANS CREPERIE (both savory and sweet French crepes) located at 808 E. Chambers St. in the Riverwest neighborhood. There is a lovely patio if the weather is nice. There is no extra charge for credit



"Let's Eat Out" took 22 of us to McCoco's Caribbean Restaurant in West Allis in late May for a delicious lunch with Puerto Rican, Jamaican and Columbian specialities.

cards. Each person will order and pay individually at the register. **BONUS:** For those who wish, there is an optional mini-WHET walk after lunch to wear off some of those extra calories. We'll meet at the nearby Kilbourn Reservoir Park with the best view of downtown Milwaukee and learn about the reservoir as well as the pumping station (626 E. North Ave.) below.

For all the LEO outings please contact Ann Line to let her know you are coming. The restaurants need to know the count so that tables can be set up for us.

FOOD PANTRY OUTREACH NEEDS HELP

The food pantry — NOURISH MKE, where we have been volunteering for over a year — is in need of Saturday morning volunteers. In the summer we don't have the normal school groups

helping, and we are busier than ever! Please contact Gayle Best or Mary Cimbalnik if you could give us a Saturday morning this summer. You won't be sorry!



OLD CARS AND NEW CRAFTS

Kissel cars — made in Hartford from 1906 to 1931 — and more than 120 antique cars from all over the world drew 20 FFGM members to the Wisconsin Auto Museum for Hartford Day on May 21. Most enjoyed lunch at Perc Place and a treat at Scoop DeVille Ice Cream Shop. In the afternoon, 14 used their creativity to make fused glass night lights and plant stakes at Hen Picked Antiques & Stained Glass.

old wade house

About 30 FFGM members got glimpses of life in 1860s rural Wisconsin with a guided tour of the Wade House Historic Site in Greenbush — its large house used as a stagecoach stop, with a working blacksmith shop and working sawmill. Horse-drawn carriages took the group between the house and the Visitors Center, which houses the largest collection of horse-drawn vehicles in Wisconsin. Then it was off for lunch at Fudgienuckles in nearby Glenbeulah.





LAURA AND PATRICK LESSILA

Patrick and Laura have called Wauwatosa home for 32 years. Family means everything to them. Twins Sarah and Sean have grown into remarkable adults. Sarah holds a master's degree in exercise physiology from Marquette University and works as a research specialist at the University of Michigan. Sean is a sous chef at the famous Olde Pink House Restaurant in Savannah, Georgia. He and his soon-to-be wife Julia, a graduate student in film at SCAD, are proud parents of bright and busy 2-year-old daughter, Violet.



Patrick works for the Elmbrook School District, maintaining the outdoor spaces around Brookfield Central High School, including its athletic fields and the Saturday morning Farmers Market. He previously was a maintenance and facilities service manager at Marquette University.

Laura retired in 2024 after 36 years of teaching kindergarten and first grade in the Waukesha School District. She fondly remembers the joy of teaching her “littles” and witnessing their many aha moments throughout the years.

Patrick and Laura enjoy spending time at their lake house in Cecil on Shawano Lake. Summers are filled with pontoon rides, kayaking, fishing, and swimming, while winters bring snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and ice fishing. They also love to travel around the United States — especially to national and state parks. Laura has traveled to England, Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and the French Riviera while in high school and spent a summer teaching in Brisbane, Australia, as well as exploring the cities of Sydney, Cairns, and Alice Springs. At home, they enjoy cooking, gardening, golfing, and cheering on the Green Bay Packers (though Patrick also roots for the Miami Dolphins!).

Patrick and Laura are looking forward to making new friends, traveling and learning about different cultures as members of the Friendship Force.