



# friendship force

## GREATER MILWAUKEE

*a world of friends is a world of peace*

MARCH-APRIL 2025

[www.friendshipforcemilwaukee.org](http://www.friendshipforcemilwaukee.org)

### president's message

Since the last newsletter, Jimmy Carter, the 39<sup>th</sup> U.S. president, passed away on Dec. 29 at the age of 100. This remarkable man had an important role in the founding of the Friendship Force.

During the Civil Rights movement in 1966, Carter ran for governor of Georgia and came in a distant third. His liberal views failed to catch on, and strong segregationist Lester Maddox won the election. But at the time, a governor could serve only one term, and Carter chose to run again when Maddox's term ended. This time, Carter



Dave Loosen

was not as outspoken with his liberal ideas. In fact, the *Atlanta Constitution Journal* labeled Carter an "ignorant, racist, backward, ultra-conservative, red-necked South Georgia peanut farmer." After he won, he returned to his true beliefs and called for an end to segregation, among other progressive issues.

In 1976, Carter would run for president. He was probably the least well-known of the ten candidates for the Democratic nomination. However, he won the nomination and the presidential election.

There is little argument that Carter's largest influence in the world came after the presidency. He is certainly considered one of our country's greatest ex-presidents. For his humanitarian efforts — including his work with Habitat for Humanity and his founding of the Carter Center to promote human rights and alleviate suffering around the globe — he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

In 1977, Carter helped launch the Friendship Force International. The organization's goal was to foster global understanding and friendship through cultural exchanges. Carter believed in the importance of personal relationships in breaking down barriers between nations. Carter walked the talk by participating in Friendship Force exchanges with his wife Rosalynn and by inviting members from other countries to visit their hometown, Plains, Georgia.

Carter provided us all with a role model worthy to follow on our own life's journey. I, for one, am grateful for the role Jimmy Carter played in creating the Friendship Force.

## RIVERWEST

let's explore

Thursday, March 13

We will start with a guided tour by the owner of Retrospekt at 811 E. Vienna St. Please meet there at 11:30 a.m.

Retrospekt restores and repairs and sells vintage/retro tech — think Polaroid cameras, Nintendo, VHS, records, cassettes, typewriters. We will learn about the history and mission of Retrospekt and will visit the workshop and design studio. There will be time for questions and answers, as well. Retrospekt was a part of Doors Open, and this is a special tour just for us. Be prepared for a bit of quirky fun!



Then it's sweet tooth time at Burke's Candy at 3840 N. Fratney St., a two-minute walk away. There we will have a brief talk on the history and background of Burke's Candy in Milwaukee and time to buy a few treats if desired.

Afterwards, we will head to Cafe Corazon at 3129 N. Bremen St. for a 1 p.m. lunch. Cafe Corazon recently was named best Mexican restaurant in Wisconsin and voted best burrito in Milwaukee. It is known for its locally sourced food. You will choose and pay individually for your meal there.

There is no cost to you except for your meal at Cafe Corazon and any treats you choose to buy at Burke's Candy. You do need to contact Ann Line to reserve your place by March 10.

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## at a glance

**3/2** Fifth @ 5. 2 p.m. Mary Hauser and Jerome Randall, 10131 W. Nash Ave., Wauwatosa. R.S.V.P. to Mary.

**3/12** Book Club. 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. *The End of Drum-Time* (Lapp/Sami) by Hanna Pylvainen.

**3/13** Riverwest Day. 11:30 a.m. at Retrospekt, 811 E. Vienna St.; Burke's Candy at 3840 N. Fratney St., and 1 p.m. lunch at Cafe Corazon, 3129 N. Bremen St. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

**3/26** L.E.O. 12:30 p.m. at Mc Kiernan's Irish Pub, 2066 S. 37th St. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

**3/28:** Game Night, 6:30 p.m., 17400 W. Westward Dr., New Berlin. R.S.V.P. to Gayle Best.

**4/7** FFGM Board meeting. 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**4/8** UWM Outing rescheduled. See page 3. R.S.V.P. to Mary Wacker. Limit 30.

**4/15** New member gathering. 6 p.m. St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave., Wauwatosa.

**4/16** L.E.O. 12:30 p.m. at Ni Burmese, 2140 S. Kinnickinnic Ave. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

**4/27** Spring Fling, 12:15 p.m. Village Bowl, N86 W18330 Main St., Menomonee Falls. R.S.V.P. to Gayle Best.

**2025 Journeys**

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

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

Nov. 10-17 - Baton Rouge, LA Outbound.

Check [my.friendshipforce.org](http://my.friendshipforce.org) frequently for other travel opportunities.

**FIFTH @ 5: march 2 at 2**

Mary Hauser and Jerry Randall will host the March 5th @ 5 at 10131 W. Nash Ave., Wauwatosa, although in keeping with winter hours, the gathering will be 2-4 p.m. on Sunday, March 2. R.S.V.P. to Mary at 262.719.8585 or [mhauser2012@att.net](mailto:mhauser2012@att.net).

Bob and Nancy Mitchell will host the May 5th @ 5, but volunteers are needed for most of 2025. 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. Or you can host a game night. Or some other activity you think people would enjoy.

During winter months, when it's dark early, we have been changing the time to earlier in the afternoon. You can even change the date to a Saturday or Sunday closer to the actual 5th of the month.

Please let Barbara Geckwhen you'd like to host.

**MARCH 12: book club**

FFGM has been reading together since 2017. This year we will read our 50th book! Books may be fiction or non-fiction but need to deal with another ethnicity or culture or take place in another country. We meet the second Wednesday of the odd-numbered months at 1:30 p.m. In the bad weather months (January, March, November) we meet on Zoom, and in the good weather months (May, July, September) we meet in-person. Each meeting is led by a facilitator who provides background and discussion questions. FFGM Book Club is open to all. It would be best if you finished the book, but please join us even if you haven't.

On March 12, we will discuss *The End of Drum-Time* (Lapp/Sami) by Hanna Pylvainen. Nancy Rubly will be the facilitator.

Remaining 2025 list of books and book club dates are:

- May 14: *The Lion Women of Tehran* by Marjan Kamali (Iran)
- July 9: *The Art of Losing* by Alice Zeniter (France/Algeria)
- Sept. 10: *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee (Korea/Japan)
- Nov. 12: *Wicked Milwaukee* by Yance Marti (Milwaukee)

**Save The Date!** At the Nov. 12 meeting, author Yance Marti will join us to talk about his book, followed by a Q&A for all book lovers. Yance's mother, Lois Marti, was a long-time FFGM member.

## APRIL 8: UWM rescheduled

Let's try this again and hope the weather is better than it was for our previous attempt in January.

UWM is home to some amazing and internationally recognized resources. During our visit, we will have the opportunity for guided tours to several of our famous collections.

On Tuesday, April 8, we'll meet at 9:15 a.m. at the Metro Market on Oakland Avenue north of Capitol Drive and then carpool to the university, where we'll receive UWM maps.

Or, you can meet the group at 9:50 a.m. at the UWM Library's front desk (first floor, west wing) for a 10 a.m. tour of the American Geographical Society Library (<https://uwm.edu/libraries/agsl/>) This collection includes two million items formerly housed in New York City.

We'll be on our own for lunch at 11 a.m. at the Union dining area.

At 12:30 p.m., we'll tour the Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum (<https://uwm.edu/geosciences/greene-museum/>) in Lapham Hall, Room 168. The collection includes more than 5,000 fossils, rare and exotic minerals, and half of the largest meteorite to strike Wisconsin.

At 2 p.m., we'll visit the Manfred Olson Planetarium, Physics Building, Room 139 (<https://uwm.edu/planetarium/>) to see the "Scale of the Universe" program connecting us to the beauty of the night sky and the wonders of the cosmos.

Plan to return to your cars about 3 p.m.

Please bring \$6 on April 8 for the planetarium show.

R.S.V.P. by Tuesday, April 1, to Mary Wacker. (Limit 30 people).

Before the program, a confirmation email will be sent with a UWM map, parking information and Union food options.



## APRIL 27: spring fling

Come celebrate the arrival of spring on Sunday, April 27, with FFGM's Annual Spring Fling!

This year's luncheon will be at the Village Bowl, N86 W 18330 Main St., Menomonee Falls with a social at 12:15 p.m., lunch 1-2:30 p.m. and fun and games at 2:45-3:15.

Nancy Mitchell's son, Jack, will be our chef. He will be preparing a lunch of BBQ glazed pork ribs, mesquite chicken with roasted onions and peppers, BBQ beans, coleslaw, garden salad, and rolls. A vegetarian plate, available on request, will be pasta primavera.

Our lunch includes coffee and water. Homemade dessert will be offered.

**R.S.V.P by April 4<sup>th</sup>** to Gayle Best and Dorothy Krupa. Dorothy will invoice you for the \$28 cost of the meal, with payment options of e-check, check, or credit card. Please note the restaurant requires **a 3-week advance notice.**

## MARCH 28: let's play

Back by popular request! It's Game Night at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 28, at 17400 W. Westward Dr. in New Berlin.

Come ready to play some board games, snack a bit, and have some fun!

Please bring: 1) something to eat to share and 2) a box of cereal for the food pantry at NourishMKE.

R.S.V.P. to Gayle Best.

## MARCH 26: l.e.o. at McKiernan's

The response to the new LEO endeavor has been GREAT! Keep it up! We all like to eat out and try new spots.

Mark your calendars for the March and April LEO outings. We are going ethnic for these two. You do not need to pay in advance, but you do need to let Ann Line know in advance so she can let the restaurant know how many to expect.

At 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 26, we'll visit Mc Kiernan's Irish Pub, 2066 S. 37th St., Milwaukee for a late St. Patrick's Day celebration. The restaurant is described as a "hidden gem" on the [onmilwaukee.com](http://onmilwaukee.com) website. Be sure to let Ann know early, as we are restricted to 15-17 people.

At 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 16 we'll lunch at Ni Burmese, 2140 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.,



24 FFGM members and guests enjoyed lunch at Singha Thai restaurant in West Allis, the second Let's Eat Out event.

Milwaukee. This is a new Burmese restaurant opened by a mother and daughter from Burma and has received good reviews.

Afterwards, on the same block you can check out Roll-Up for build your own Vietnamese spring rolls or Mochinut for mochi doughnuts and boba tea!

## FOOD PANTRY APPRECIATES FFGM HELPERS

Many thanks to all who have donated plastic bags, egg cartons, food and/or money to the Mitchell Street Food Pantry operated by NOURISH MKE. Every little thing is greatly appreciated — and used!

Numbers in need continue to increase, as has the volunteer force from FFGM. This past month Wendy Turk and Laura Lessila joined Gayle Best, Mary Cimbalnik and Dave Kalan (the regulars).

Please continue to save plastic bags for the food pantry, but you can hold onto egg cartons for now. Let Gayle, Mary or Dave know if you would like to volunteer. We would be thrilled to have more participation!

## OOH LA LA! FILMS

The 28th Annual French Film Festival runs this year until Feb. 23. All films are free and are subtitled.

The films are shown at the UWM Union Cinema located at 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd.

The schedule of films can be found at <https://uwm.edu/french-film-festival/>.

# TIPS FOR HOSTING AN AMBASSADOR

## Prior to their Visit

- E-mail your ambassador and share basic information about your family. Also share whether or not you have a pet. You may also want to include your interests.
- Ask if the ambassador has any allergies or dietary restrictions.
- In the e-mail, ask what your ambassador likes to drink in the morning (coffee, juice, or tea). Find out what they usually eat for breakfast.
- Decide what events you plan to attend during the week. You do not need to participate every day. It is helpful to have a day host for your ambassadors — for only a half day or a whole day. Allow other club members to participate. A day host can pick up the ambassador at your home, spend the day with them, and return them to your home.

## First Day of the Journey

- Upon arrival, give them a tour of your house. Show them their rooms.
- Make sure you show them how to use the shower or bath tub. Also show them where extra toilet paper is kept. Provide them with towels, soap, hand towels and wash cloths. Ask if they would like a night light on in the bathroom at night.
- In the kitchen, show them where the coffee cups, glasses, bowls and plates are located. You may also demonstrate how to make the coffee.
- Open the refrigerator to show them what items are in there. Then they will know where to get milk, creamer or juice. Let them know where the cereal, bread and fruit are so they have access to them.
- Review the next day's agenda. Discuss the time the first event starts. Explain to them the amount of time it takes to get to that specific place. Ask them how much time they will need to get ready in the morning. Will they shower in the morning or at night? Based on that information, tell them the

## OPPORTUNITIES TO HOST

We'll need several hosts July 22-26 for a mini-journey from the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City club. Activities likely will include Germanfest on Friday, July 25 and a tour of the Veteran's Administration grounds at Wood.

From Aug. 16-23, we'll need up to a dozen hosts for ambassadors from Adelaide, Australia. Irishfest may be part of the itinerary. On Aug. 23, a few hosts will be asked to drive the Australian ambassadors to Dubuque, IA, where they'll meet up with their new hosts from the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City club. A picnic with the whole group — Iowans, Wisconsinites and Australians — is a possibility.

If you'd like host, please ask Wendy Turk or Chris Vogel to put you on a list.

specific time they will need to leave the house.

- Depending on the weather, you may offer suggestions on what to wear or what to bring along. (Provide a small umbrella if it is supposed to rain.) If there will be a lot of walking, suggest comfortable walking shoes.

## Night Before Each Day of the Journey

- Always review the next day's events. Remind them what time they will be leaving the house. Share what the weather will be like that day so they can decide what to wear. Also let them know if there are special events that are not listed in the booklet — visiting another member's house for a dinner party.

## Early in the Week of the Journey

- Offer suggestions on what your ambassadors may want to do on their free day. Talk it over with them. Make some decisions for that free day.

## During the Week of the journey

- Have a lot of fun with your ambassador! They will enjoy spending this time with you. When they enter your home, they are an ambassador. When they leave your home, they are a friend.



Thanks to Barbara and Joe Geck and to Linda Epperson for hosting Fifths @ 5 in January and February. Several people brought invited guests — including a few who subsequently joined FFGM! Cindy Hum (above, with Linda) also brought a special Asian New Year's dish in February.



# Friendship Force of Greater Milwaukee Annual Meeting December 15, 2024, New Berlin Hills Golf Course

## Welcome and President's Report by Chris Vogel

Chris called the meeting to order at 1:35pm, reporting that 2024 has been a very good year for FFGM, which has grown to 110 members.

One of the year's highlights was the FFI North American Conference held in Milwaukee in early October. Dave Kalan headed a committee that helped FFI select a site and plan extra activities. FFGM members volunteered at the conference in various ways. Chris attended several of the workshops; a big take-away was the importance of every member's involvement in the club in some way, e.g., by serving on committees, hosting ambassadors, participating in journeys, and hosting dinners.

In 2025 FFGM plans to host ambassadors from Cedar Rapids/Iowa City in July and as many as 15 ambassadors from Adelaide, Australia in August. Many home hosts will be needed, and Chris plans to include an article in an upcoming newsletter about what home hosting entails.

A special surprise was the presentation of the Wayne Smith Medal to Rosie Haas and Ann Line. This award was created by the Friendship Force International Board of Directors to honor individuals who demonstrate outstanding leadership in furthering the organization's mission of fostering global friendship. Chris elaborated on some of the many past and present contributions by Rosie and Ann to the organization, including as Board



Ann Line leads a game at the Holiday Party.

President and Vice President and inbound and outbound journey coordinators. Chris thanked Mary Hauser for writing the nomination, with assistance from Chris Reischl, Dave Kalan and Dorothy Kelley.

## Treasurer's Report by Dorothy Krupa

Dorothy reported that the financial condition of FFGM, summarized below, is excellent:

Bank Balances as of November 30, 2024:

General Operation account	\$10,945
Investment-Wellington Mutual	\$17,924
Restricted account	\$6,177.47
Exchange account	\$2,000

Total \$37,046.54

As of November 30, Income was \$4,777 and Expenses were \$6,894.02, resulting in a net loss of \$2,123.02. The FFGM board has intentionally budgeted a loss in past few years as a means of reducing some of our more than adequate cash reserves and also returning some of the assets to our members. Dorothy's service as Treasurer will end in 2026. The Board welcomes any suggestions for filling this role.

## Community Outreach Report by Dave Kalan

FFGM volunteers have been quite involved at the Mitchell Street Food Center, (formerly Despensa de la Paz) one of the food distribution centers run by Nourish MIKE. The agency's director, Valerie MacMillan, attended the annual meeting. She gave a brief presentation about the organization's services and the social and nutritional benefits it provides to a large and diverse population. FFGM volunteers' service and other contributions are greatly appreciated.

## New Membership Report by Dorothy Kelley

Dorothy reported that the current membership is 110. At least 25 new members have joined over the past two years, and Dorothy regularly receives inquiries about the club.

## Activities Committee Report by Ann Line and Gayle Best

Ann reviewed the highlights of activities held each month of 2024, all of which were well-attended and received positive reviews.

- January, Milwaukee Urban Stables

See **ANNUAL MEETING**, page 8

## **ANNUAL MEETING**, *from page 7*

- February, Phobruary and the Bobblehead Museum
- March, Milwaukee Public Museum and Game Night
- April, Oconomowoc Day
- May, Road America and the Spring Fling
- June, Cedarburg Day
- July, Milwaukee County Zoo (tour led by docent and new FFGM President, Dave Loosen) and Mary Wacker's AARP presentation on decluttering and downsizing
- August, Annual Picnic
- September, Pizza on the Farm in East Troy
- October, Cave of the Mounds and Mt. Horeb and Barbara Markoff's AARP presentation on fraud watch basics
- November, Fort Atkinson Day.
- December, Annual Meeting and Holiday Party.

Gayle listed activities planned for the first four months of 2025. In January club members will take a field trip to two museums on the campus of UW-Milwaukee, as well as the planetarium. February will be Delafield Day with visits to the Hawks Inn Historical Society and Civil War Museum. March is Riverwest with Retrospekt, a business that showcases retro technology, and Burke's Candy; and in April there will be a behind-the-scenes tour of the Milwaukee Police Department. More information about these and all the activities will be included in the bimonthly newsletters.

Ann is starting a new activity called LEO, which stands for Let's Eat Out. Each month FFGM members will visit an interesting restaurant, possibly an ethnic or new one. January's pick is Wild Roots in West Allis.

Members are welcome to attend the activity planning committee meetings held every two months, and suggestions for activities are always welcome. Contact either Ann or Gayle.

### **5th at 5 Report by Barbara Geck**

Barbara encouraged members to consider hosting a 5th at 5 in 2025. She and her husband are hosting the January 5th at 5 on January 5 from 2-4pm. These are a great way for newer members to become involved and meet fellow FFGM members.

### **Journey Highlights for 2024**

Chris reported on the outbound journey to Shelby, NC, and the mini-outbound to the Quad Cities and Cedar Rapids/Iowa City, IA. These were active, fun and

interesting. FFGM is hosting Cedar Rapids/Iowa City for four nights in July. Cindy Hum, the coordinator for an inbound journey from Baton Rouge, LA, in August reported that this journey went very well. Many activities were offered and most were open to all club members. Clarine Furey reviewed the recent journey to New Zealand and Australia. Of the seven FFGM members who went to New Zealand for eight days, five went on to Australia. These were also very active and different journeys. New Zealand locations were rustic in contrast to the mainly modern surroundings of the journey to Australia.

### **Journey Previews for 2025**

**July 21-25** Mini-inbound from Cedar Rapids/Iowa City, IA

**August 16-23** (Tentative) Inbound from Adelaide, Australia

**Fall 2025**, possibly early November, outbound to Baton Rouge, LA

### **Election of Officers**

Dave Loosen was unanimously elected as President. His nomination was put forth by Nancy Bowen and seconded by Louise Cieslak.

Stephanie Freier was unanimously elected as Vice President. Her nomination was put forth by Wendy Turk and seconded by Dave Kalan. Stephanie will be serving on the Board of Friendship Force International.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm

Submitted by Carrie Landers, Secretary





**friendship force**  
GREATER MILWAUKEE

new members

Tom Schneider

River Kaster

Doris Mertens

Diane Marshall

Laura Lessila

**NEW MEMBER GATHERING**

If you are a new member or a member who has not been able to attend a previous New Member Gathering, you are invited to attend one at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 15 at St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church, 1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave., Wauwatosa. This is an opportunity to learn more about FFGM and FF International. In addition you will have an opportunity to meet our board members and other new members.