



# friendship force

## GREATER MILWAUKEE

*a world of friends is a world of peace*

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2024

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

### president's message

If this issue of the newsletter has a theme, it's how our Friendship Force of Greater Milwaukee helps those less fortunate in the city as well as those from other cultures — and what more we can do.

Learning about each other through small gatherings like the one Dave Kalan hosted for several visitors from Papua New Guinea is a great example.



Chris Vogel

Hosting such a dinner can be a one-time effort (maybe with help from your friends) or an activity you'll want to continue doing.

Other volunteer efforts can take more time and be more regular — like assisting people at the Mitchell Street Food Pantry — which a few of our members are passionate about. It could become your passion, too.

Another very occasional and very easy activity is making peanut butter & jelly sandwiches that are given to Milwaukee people who are homeless. The need for sandwiches, as well as homemade cookies, has grown.

As another article in this newsletter — a follow-up to an informative AARP session on decluttering that member Mary Wacker presented — points out, most of us have far more than we need, and many of us don't know what to do with extra stuff. Plenty of ideas are included!

Please watch your emails as the Friendship Force North American Conference Oct. 7-10 gets closer. We'll be letting you know how you can help at the conference.

It was great to see so many people at the Annual Picnic! Besides our nine ambassadors from Baton Rouge, LA., who entertained us with their lively Mardi Gras-style dancing, masks and beads, more than 70 FFGM members attended!



Dave Kalan, lower right, with his dinner guests from Papua New Guinea plus FFGM members Lynne Loosen and Amy Bley.

### INTERESTED IN HOSTING A MEAL FOR INTERNATIONAL GUESTS?

The International Institute of Wisconsin brings in up-and-coming leaders from around the world for a week of professional meetings. The delegates stay at a hotel but are given the opportunity to experience local culture by getting into a home one of the nights for a dinner party.

A recent experience involved seven people from Papua New Guinea at a dinner party July 4 at Dave Kalan's house. It was the visitor's first time to the U.S., and they were delighted to meet our FFGM members and to talk about their culture and customs.

If you are interested in having this fun dinner hosting experience, contact Dave for a link to fill out a survey from the International Institute.

## at a glance

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**9/5** Fifth @ 5, 5 p.m., hosted by Tom Golding and Diane Stoiber in the party room of their apartment complex, 815 Washington St., Grafton. R.S.V.P. to Diane Stoiber or Tom Golding.

**9/7** Pizza on the Farm and farm tour, 1 p.m., Grassway Organics, W2716 Friemoth Rd., East Troy. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

**9/11** Book Club. 1 p.m. in the Firefly Room of Wauwatosa Public Library with author Lauren Fox. *Send for Me* (German, U.S.)

**9/30** FFGM Board meeting, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**10/2** Mount Horeb Day with visits to Cave of the Mounds and the Driftless Historium. \$25. R.S.V.P. by Sept. 25 to Mary Cimbalnik, **and** Dorothy Krupa.

**10/16** Fraud Watch Basics, 2 p.m., Immanuel Baptist Church, 4250 N. 137<sup>th</sup> St., Brookfield. R.S.V.P. to Mary Wacker.

### Journeys

April 15-22 - Shelby, NC Outbound

July 16-23 - Quad Cities & Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Outbound

Aug. 10-17 - Baton Rouge, LA Inbound

Oct. 19 - Nov. 10, New Zealand and Australia.

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



Providence Place in Grafton, where Diane Stoiber and Tom Golding will host the September Fifth @ 5.

## SEPT. 5: fifth @ 5

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FFGM's next Fifth at 5 will happen at Providence Place, 815 Washington St., Grafton, 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 5. The activities for that evening will include an optional tour of the facility as well as a presentation by the director, Jenny Gall. Some treats will be provided. Please bring the drinks and snacks you prefer. R.S.V.P. to hosts Diane Stoiber, 262.357.4711, or Tom Golding, 262.302.1646.

Hosts are still needed for October, November and December 2024. Please respond to Barbara Geck. And feel free to plan into 2025!

## SEPT 11: book club special event

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The Sept. 11 book club meeting will be a special event, with author Lauren Fox coming in person to speak to us about her book *Send for Me*.

The discussion will be at 1 p.m. in the Firefly Room of the Wauwatosa Public Library, 7635 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa.

Please consider inviting your non-FFGM member friends so that we have a good turnout for our discussion of the book, which moves between Germany on the eve of World War II and present-day Milwaukee. Mary Hauser will be the facilitator.

Do you like to read? If so, come read with us! We meet the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months at 1:30 p.m., usually via Zoom. Books, either fiction or non-fiction, take place in another country or deal with a different culture. A facilitator guides the discussion.

The year's final book club meeting, via Zoom, will be Nov. 13: *American Dirt* (Mexico and U.S.) by Jeanine Cummins; facilitator: Iva Richards.

## SEPT. 7: pizza on the farm

How does a wood-fired oven pizza with locally sourced toppings sound? Yum! Join your FFGM friends at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 7, at Grassway Organics, W2716 Friemoth Rd., East Troy and find out for yourself.

First, we will meet in front of the farm store at Grassway Organics for a walking farm tour led by Farmer Chaz.

Then you can choose your pizza. Prices for a 14" - 16" pizza range from \$22 to \$34 depending on the toppings. The meat and cheese toppings are from the actual farm. Gluten-free crusts are available.

The pizza serves two to four people so you can share the pizza and the price if desired. You will order and pay on site. Beverages are available for purchase.

This event is held outdoors on a 380-acre working farm. A limited number of picnic tables are available so it would be very wise to bring a chair. There is live music as well.

Please contact Ann Line to let her know that you are coming. Car pooling can be arranged.

## OCT. 2: mount horeb day

Mount Horeb makes the bold claim to be the Troll Capital of the World! And where did these trolls come from? A website linked to the Mount Horeb Chamber of Commerce claims the trolls sprang up from the earth when the nearby Cave of the Mounds was opened. They found their way to Mount Horeb and liked it so much they stayed and stayed.

FFGM will be "taking the troll way" to both the Cave of the Mounds at 2075 Cave of the Mounds Rd. and Mount Horeb on Wednesday, Oct. 2. This quaint and friendly town is in the heart of the beautiful driftless area.

We plan to carpool from Meadowbrook Park and Ride in Pewaukee (County G and I-94) at 8:30 a.m. to the Cave of the Mounds, arriving at the cave for a 50-minute tour beginning at 10 a.m.

Then we will drive the short distance to have lunch (pay on your own) at The Grumpy Troll Brew Pub at 105 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. and cross the street for a guided tour of the Driftless Historium at 100 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.

**R.S.V.P. by September 25** to Mary Cimbalnik and Dorothy Krupa. Dorothy will invoice you for the cost of the Cave of the Mounds ( \$17) and the Historium (\$8)= **\$25 total**, with payment options of e-check, check or credit card.

## ZOO TOUR

FFGM member and 14-year Milwaukee County Zoo volunteer Dave Loosen gave a fascinating and informative tour to 23 members and guests on July 31. We learned much about modern zoo practices and how much zoos help endangered animals.



# WAYS TO HELP NOURISH MKE FOOD PANTRY

By Mary Cimbalnik

FFGM members have been helping in the battle against food anxiety for the past 18 months, but need your help! Dave Kalan created a partnership with Pastor Max Ramsey and the food pantry when looking for additional Outreach opportunities for FFGM last year. Since then, several of us have been helping out consistently.

Assisting client shoppers at the Mitchell Street Food Pantry (formerly Despensa de la Paz) at 1615 S. 22nd Street on Saturday mornings has opened our eyes to a growing need. In the last six months there has been a 30% increase in the number of families coming to the pantry — but a nationally and locally dwindling food supply. It is heart-rending to try to assist a client when the shelves are empty. And, yes, it happens weekly. Even though amounts are allotted based on family size, food runs out.

As we have come to know the clients, staff and volunteers, we've witnessed a sense of caring, community, gratitude, laughter and even joy that exists between the clients and those that make this food pantry happen. It's not unusual for a client to say, "I have some. Give it to someone who needs it." Heartfelt thank-yous are plentiful, and it is unbelievably affirming to be warmly greeted by a client who remembers you. One day a client with a beautiful voice broke into song and had us all clapping and swaying! These people have very little, and all have needs, but there is also joy and gratitude.

This particular pantry serves the poorest part of Milwaukee. There are no food stores except for occasional small corner stores where prices are exorbitant. Yes, there is crime, greed, deplorable living conditions as one would expect. Pastor Ramsey, who

established the pantries in this area 25 years ago, has established a safe zone surrounding the pantry by two blocks in all directions. I have never felt unsafe in any way.

Each week, we will have a client with whom there is a language barrier. We use hand signals and get the job done. I have heard there are as many as 20 different languages represented over time.

FF strives to make worldwide friends, and we can do that right here in our own city! This neighborhood is where most of the newer immigrants to Milwaukee start their life in America. There is a clear link between FF goals and helping feed folks. And you can do it without leaving your city! Here are some ways you can help:

- Save egg cartons and sturdy plastic bags. One of the highest expenses is plastic bags, and eggs sometimes come to us in packages of 18, which should be divided to make them go further.
- Volunteer on Saturday mornings! This requires some strength and stamina. We can help!
- Deliver food from area stores to the pantry. Drivers are needed on Wednesday afternoons and Friday mornings
- Donate money. Every \$5 feeds one person for five days due to the pantry's bulk buying.

We'll provide additional ways to help in future newsletters.

For more information, please contact:

- Gayle Best
- Mary Cimbalnik
- Volunteer Manager at Nourish MKE, [volunteer@NourishMKEpantry.org](mailto:volunteer@NourishMKEpantry.org).

## CALLING ALL PBJ SANDWICH MAKERS AND COOKIE BAKERS

A group of FFGM members have taken turns to provide 50 PBJ sandwiches once a month for Street Life. We are part of a larger group that was providing 500 sandwiches and 500 cookies to homeless people on the streets each week.

Now the need has increased weekly to 750, so we can have several FFGM volunteers each month. We are

working on our schedule for the remainder of 2024 and 2025.

If you are interested in volunteering to provide sandwiches or cookies, contact Dave Kalan.

# LAISSEZ LES BONS TEMPS ROULER

In mid-August, the good times rolled for nine ambassadors from Baton Rouge, LA, as well as many FFGM members who hosted, made small dinners and joined in on a week of activities from Cedarburg to downtown Milwaukee to Greendale.



# RESOURCES FROM AARP DECLUTTERING TALK

King Tut was able to be buried with all his treasures, over 5,000 of them! However, we are not like King Tut. An AARP survey found that the most difficult aspect of handling a loved one's estate was dealing with all the "stuff." So, a true act of love is to find a place for your treasures now — either by gifting to a loved one, or giving to others who will love them. To help you with your decluttering journey, here are some suggestions recommended by audience members at Mary Wacker's July 10 Decluttering Workshop.

## Charities

**1. Street Life**, 4250 N. 137th St., Brookfield. Drop-offs on Wednesday mornings. This charity helps the homeless in Milwaukee and needs T-shirts (S-L), blue jeans (Men's 32-38 and Women's 10-16; sweatshirts/hoodies (S-L) and travel-size shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste, and blankets.

**2. Hope Closet**, 8633 W. Becher St., West Allis, (414.541.9500). This organization helps families that are homeless or in transition in the West Allis/West Milwaukee School District. It needs food, new/gently used clothing, school supplies, and household items like towels, lamps, dishes, and sheets.

**3. Hanan Refugee Relief**, 3927. S. Howell Ave., Milwaukee. Contact Halima Aichoun, 414.800.4168, [staff@hanan.org](mailto:staff@hanan.org). Hanan helps refugees become contributing members of their community by providing long-term solutions in areas such as housing, labor opportunities and medical relief. It needs home furnishings in excellent condition and household/kitchen goods in excellent condition. A furniture

pick-up may be possible. Call to arrange for any donations.

**4. Habitat for Humanity Restore**, 3015 N. 114th St., Wauwatosa, (414-257-9078) seeks to build affordable housing for people in Milwaukee and the surrounding areas. Other locations in Waukesha, Greenfield, Franklin and Germantown. It needs gently used furniture, building materials, appliances, and home accessories.

**5. Saint Vincent De Paul**, 4476 W. 108th St., Greenfield (414.377.9077) and locations in Waukesha and Pewaukee. The charity is dedicated to eliminating poverty and hunger throughout Milwaukee County. It needs clothing and household items.

**6. Super Thrift**, 5333 N. 91st St., Milwaukee, 414.763.7333, helps teens and adults who struggle with addiction. It needs gently used household goods, clothing and furniture. Items can be dropped off, or call for a pickup.

## Consignment Shops

**1. Elite Repeat**, 2205 N. Calhoun Rd., Brookfield (262.789.9359). This clothing

consignment shop for women and men takes only name brand items.

**2. Optimist Bazaar**, 10600 W. Bluemound Rd., Wauwatosa (414.885.0352) is a fine furniture/home décor consignment shop

**3. The Ottoman Society**, 13408 Watertown Plank Rd., Elm Grove (262.786.1786) is a fine furniture and home furnishings consignment shop.

## Other

**1. Divine Consign**, Brookfield Conference Center and Waukesha Expo ([divineconsignsale.com](http://divineconsignsale.com)). It offers consignment events for quality women's clothing/shoes/jewelry/accessories four times a year in fall and spring. People can sell 60 items two times a year-and can donate unsold items to charity at the end of the events.

**2. Caring Transitions of Metro Milwaukee** (414.269.4618) offers down-sizing solutions for partial or entire households. People sell their items with an online auction format.

## OCT. 16: FRAUD WATCH BASICS

Don't be a victim of identity theft! You have the power to fight back against fraud by taking a few practical steps.

New FFGM member and AARP presenter Barbara Markoff will discuss "Fraud Watch Basics" from 2-3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 16, at Immanuel Baptist Church, 4250 N. 137th St., Brookfield.

Barbara's presentation will empower you in the fight with proven resources and tools to help you spot and avoid identity theft.

R.S.V.P. by Oct. 9 to Mary Wacker.



## BIG IOWA WELCOME

FFGM ambassadors enjoyed a packed, fun three-day "mini-journey" to the Quad Cities in Iowa and Illinois and four wonderful days in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, Iowa, in July — with history, nature and, this being FF, lots of great food.





## PICTURE-PERFECT PICNIC

About 80 FFGM members and ambassadors from Baton Rouge, LA, enjoyed a classic summer evening at the Annual Picnic at ProHealth Care Park in New Berlin on Aug. 12. Many joined in on "minute to win it" games that had everyone laughing.

