



friendship force

GREATER MILWAUKEE

a world of friends is a world of peace

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2025

www.friendshipforcemilwaukee.org

president's message

A huge thanks is extended to all our members who have made the experience for the participants from the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City FF and Adelaide, Australia FF inbound journeys special and memorable. This group includes the home hosts, day hosts, dinner hosts, journey planning committees and each of you who interacted with these ambassadors at one of the activities. Special thanks to Chris Vogel and Kathy Buening, who coordinated the

efforts. I am confident the ambassadors will have fond thoughts and great stories about their experiences.

A big thanks also goes out to Cindy Hum for being the ambassador coordinator for this fall's outbound journey to Baton Rouge. Looking ahead to next year,

thanks go to Stephanie Freier and Joe Geck for being our ambassador coordinators for the outbound journey to Setouchi Hiroshima, Japan; to Mary Wacker and Sharron Ronco, who will be our ambassador coordinators to Flathead Valley in northwestern Montana next September; and to Ann Line, host coordinator for an inbound journey from Toulouse, France next fall.

We are still looking for a host coordinator for next July's inbound journey from Tallahassee Florida. You can contact Chris Vogel, who will be happy to explain the job expectations.



Dave Loosen

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

TOURS AND LUNCH OCT. 28

What could be more fitting for Friendship Force than a staffed tour of an organization "dedicated to the promotion of international cooperation and understanding"?

On Tuesday, Oct. 28, we will meet at 10:30 a.m. at the International Institute of Wisconsin, 1110 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., Suite 420. Leaders of the Institute — the organization that runs the Holiday Folk Fair — will be giving us overviews of services including refugee resettlement, translation, legal, education, job training and international leadership.

There is free parking on nearby streets or paid parking in front of the building.

Then we'll head about 10 blocks away to 2153 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. for a 12:30 p.m. lunch at the Kinship Cafe, a "scratch cooking" workforce development project restaurant. The cafe offers a variety of salads, bowls, hot lunches and soup.

The cafe is in the same building as Thrive on King, a joint venture of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Medical College of Wisconsin and Royal Capital committed to racial equality, inclusion, systems change and access to opportunity for all. At 1 p.m., a guide who works at Thrive on King will explain what the organization is and does — which is a lot! Free parking is provided at the Thrive on King building.

The tours are provided at no cost, but you will pay for lunch and parking, if you use it at the Institute.

Please let Mary Cimbalnik know by **Oct. 21** if you are interested. Mary needs to tell the organization how many will be on the tours and at lunch.



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at a glance

9/6 Fifth @ 5. Stephanie Freier hosting Game Night at 17400 W. Westward Dr., New Berlin. R.S.V.P to Stephanie.

9/4 Craft outing (\$25) at N56 W37815 Sunset Lane, Oconomowoc; lunch at Mantra Indian Bistro, 511 E. Wisconsin Ave., Oconomowoc; and pontoon ride with on Okauchee Lake. R.S.V.P. by Sept. 1 to Laura Lessila.

9/10 Book Club. 1:30 p.m. Mary Hauser's home, 10131 W. Nash Ave. Wauwatosa. *Pachinko* (South Korea/Japan) by Min Jin Lee.

9/26 LEO. 5 p.m. at Zocalo food truck park, 636 S. 6th St., Milwaukee. R.S.V.P. to Ann Line.

10/2 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. bus trip for "Splash of Red Cranberry Tour" in Pittsville.

10/5 Fifth @ 5 at 5 p.m. hosted by Mary Hauser and Jerry Randall, 10131 W. Nash Ave., Wauwatosa. R.S.V.P to Mary.

10/6 FFGM Board meeting. 6:30 p.m. Zoom.

10/13 LEO 5 p.m. Twisted Fisherman, 1200 W. Canal St., Milwaukee. R.S.V.P to Ann Line.

10/28 10:30 a.m. tour, International Institute of Wisconsin, 1110 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. #420, Milwaukee. Lunch at Kinship Cafe and tour of Thrive on King, 2153 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. R.S.V.P. by Oct. 21 to Mary Cimbalnik.

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

Late March/early April TBD - Setouchi Hiroshima, Japan, Outbound.

August TBD - Tallahassee, FL, Inbound

September TBD - Flathead Valley, Montana, Outbound

September TBD - Toulouse, France, Inbound



FIFTH @ 5: game night

Stephanie Freier will host a Game Night at 17400 W. Westward Dr. in New Berlin at 5 p.m. on **Saturday, Sept. 6**. Various board games will be played, and if you have a favorite game, bring it along!

Please bring your own beverage and an appetizer or dessert to share.

R.S.V.P. to Stephanie. Please note that this event is **Saturday, Sept. 6, not the 5th**.

The October 5th at 5 will be on the 5th and at 5 p.m. at the home of Mary Hauser and Jerry Randall, 10131 W. Nash Ave., Wauwatosa. R.V.S.P. to Mary.

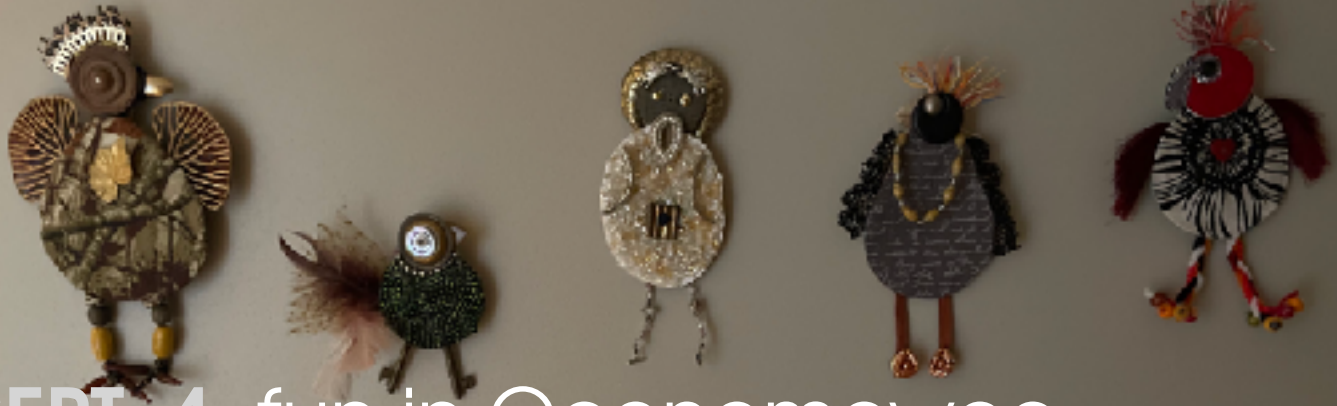
SEPT. 10: book club

The next FFGM Book Club will be at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 10. It will be in person at the home of Mary Hauser, at 10131 W. Nash Ave., Wauwatosa.

The book is *Pachinko* (Korea/Japan) by Min Jin Lee. Mary Hauser is the facilitator. Come and celebrate with us as we have just read our 50th book! There will be treats to celebrate! Share your favorite book or two that we have read over the years.

Our book club reads both fiction and nonfiction. Books selected take place in another country or deal with another ethnicity.

We have been reading together since April of 2019. Even though it would be best if you finished the book, come even though you may not have finished. Everyone is welcome. Come join us!



SEPT. 4: fun in Oconomowoc

ART CLASSES, BUFFET, AND PONTOON LAKE TOUR PLANNED

Join your FFGM friends on Thursday, Sept. 4 for a fun-filled day in Oconomowoc. Come and create with Julie Wold at Sunset Studio, go on a pontoon boat ride around Okauchee Lake provided by FFGM members Doris and Glenn Mertens, and enjoy a lunch buffet at Mantra Indian Bistro.

Julie Wold will offer two different classes at her studio at N56 W37815 Sunset Lane, Oconomowoc — Alcohol Ink (below) from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and Playful Birds (above) from 1-3 p.m. The cost of each class is \$25 (please bring the \$25 in cash) and



is limited to eight participants.

Whether you're a total beginner or an experienced artist, these classes are designed to be fun, relaxed, and inspiring. You'll explore the magic of alcohol ink and markers as you create a stunning landscape painting bursting with color OR choose from a wide variety of materials to create a delightful whimsical bird that will brighten your home with

joy and playfulness. All skill levels are welcome — just bring a smock. All other materials will be provided.

Due to the limited spaces in the art classes, Doris and Glenn Mertens have offered a pontoon boat ride around Okauchee Lake during each of the classes. The afternoon art class can go on the pontoon boat ride in the morning, then we'll have lunch and switch groups so the morning art class can go on the pontoon ride in the afternoon.

The boat ride is weather permitting. If the weather is not good or you would prefer not to go on the pontoon boat ride, there are a variety of boutiques, art galleries, and antique stores in downtown Oconomowoc to explore. We will carpool from Doris and Glenn's house, W341 N6886 Starlight Dr., to Okauchee Lake to go on the pontoon boat ride.

Lunch is from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Mantra Indian Bistro, 511 E. Wisconsin Ave., Oconomowoc. The lunch buffet is \$16.95. The restaurant accepts cash or credit cards with no additional fees.

R.S.V.P. by Sept. 1 to Laura Lessila. Please indicate if you want to participate in the art experience with Julie Wold at Sunset Studio and which project you would like to create, the Alcohol Ink (9:30-11:30 a.m.) or the Playful Birds (1-3 p.m.), lunch at Mantra Indian Bistro (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.) and the pontoon boat ride around Okauchee Lake in the morning or or afternoon. Remember, the boat ride is weather permitting.



Dave Kalan (above right) hosted a dinner for two men who work in law enforcement in Surinam and Romania who were in Milwaukee attending a program through the International Institute of Wisconsin. Dave invited several FFGM members to the dinner.



FFGM members and guests enjoyed the Aug. 5th @ 5 in Barbara and Joe Geck's backyard in Waukesha.

BUS TRIP TO CRANBERRY BOGS

6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 2

Splash of Red
Cranberry Tour
Pittsville

This bus trip will cost \$60-\$70 per person plus a \$10 per person subsidy for FFGM members. (That cost may be lower.)

We will tour cranberry bogs, the receiving station and testing stations. After lunch, we'll stop in Rudolph at a cheese factory and grotto.

You all received an email asking about your interest in the cranberry tour. Thanks for the great response! 66 people responded with 36 saying NO and 30 people saying YES. We are proceeding with plans.

Bus prices are high, and we are exploring many options.

Watch for more information via emails. Space will be limited

IOWA MINI-INBOUND

12 ambassadors from the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Friendship Force, including two visitors from Taiwan, were in our area only four days, but did a lot! Ambassadors, hosts and day hosts got a flavor for our area by touring the historic Veterans' Administration grounds in Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Museum of Quilts and Fiber Arts in Cedarburg, attended a play at Delafield Summer Stage at Lapham Peak State Park, and hoisted a brew at Germanfest.



let's eat out



The June and July LEOS maxed out at 16 attendees at Odd Duck and 17 at Three Brothers, both in Bayview. Both had waiting lists — showing it doesn't pay to wait to R.S.V.P.!



LEO EVENING DINING CONTINUES INTO FALL

Plan on a fun and casual LEO at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 25, when we visit Zocalo at 636 S. 6th St., Milwaukee. Zocalo is a food truck park with about seven food trucks.

You will find creative and unique ethnic food like *arepas* (Venezuela) and tacos and sushi. There is ice cream and pizza, as well. Many picnic tables are outside, but indoor seating is available.

At 5 p.m. Monday, Oct. 13, the year's final evening LEO will be at Twisted Fisherman, 1200 W. Canal St., Milwaukee. Let's hope for a nice autumn evening, as this restaurant overlooks the Menomonee River. It offers fish and seafood as well as ribs and burgers.

In November, we return to lunches for LEOs during the colder months.

R.S.V.P. to LEOs by emailing Ann Line.

membership

HAVE YOU TAKEN SURVEY?

Thanks to everyone who has filled out a survey prepared by our club's vice president, Stephanie Freier. The survey is an effort to learn more about your interests, preferences and ideas, in hopes of making our group more engaging to all of us.

As of early August, 47 of us have taken the short survey. It takes only a few minutes.

If you haven't yet filled it out, you can find the survey at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfikjn0flVdRq2OGO8kTkTnDQSyVYo8mnOfQZCr60nwQLgdZw/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=102579978152053099500>

WHO WANTS TO JOIN US?

We welcome new members! A membership form for FFGM is available at http://www.friendshipforcemilwaukee.org/uploads/1/7/2/9/17291124/ffgm_membership_application_2025.pdf.

NEW MEMBERS:

Glenn Mertens

Cristine Madden

Nicki Marshall

Margie Hamers



MOWA TOUR

17 FFGM members enjoyed a guided tour of the Museum of Wisconsin Art in West Bend, followed by lunch at the Riverside Brewery and Restaurant on July 17.





SHEILA O'SHEA



Sheila has lived all over the Milwaukee area since 1970 — downtown, east side and Shorewood, west side, Wauwatosa and, for 20 plus years, in the Lenox Heights neighborhood. A graduate of the University of Dayton in Home Economics Education and the University of Wisconsin in Child Development, she enjoyed working for the Community Development-Social Development teaching Head Start teachers, and as a member of its Training Department focusing on leadership development and management training. The last 15 years of her career included consulting and coaching on managing change in health care organizations.

Sheila frequently travels to see her son, Dean Bolton, and his wife Hollie and her almost 10-year old-grandson, Sebastian, in Hermosa Beach, CA. She is fortunate to see her sister, Sharon, in Sun City, AZ during the winter, as well as her sister Coleen/Walt Winkler in Plano, TX.

She feels privileged to have traveled the world including Katmandú, Nepal; Agra, India; a safari in Kenya with her son; Australia; New Zealand; and many countries in Europe, as well as volunteering two summers in a mission in Quito, Ecuador.

In retirement, she stays active playing pickleball, swimming laps and taking deep water exercise classes. She loves playing bridge, hand and foot and other card games with friends. Sheila has become a mixed-media collage artist in retirement thoroughly enjoying online classes through Pinterest and the Wauwatosa Senior Center. Her most recent adventure combined travel to Ireland to attend a pastel and mixed media retreat.

As a relatively new member of FFGM, she has participated in activities with groups from Baton Rouge, North Carolina and Cedar Rapids and is looking forward to the Australia group in August.