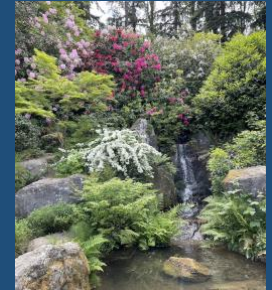




friendship force
INTERNATIONAL



*Alajuela,
Costa Rica
arrives on
Thursday,
July 3rd!*



The Friendship Force of Greater Seattle Newsletter #61 July 1, 2025

*Alajuela, Costa Rica **Inbound**
Joyce & Sue – co-coordinators
July 3 – 10, 2025*

*FFGS Board Meeting, 12-2pm
Wednesday, July 23, 2025*

*Manitoba, Canada **Outbound**
Pura – coordinator
August 9 – 19, 2025*

***FFGS General Meeting**
Sunday, August 24, 2025
2 – 4 pm.*

*FFGS Board Meeting, 12 – 2pm
Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025*

*Winnipeg, Canada **Inbound**
Elaine - coordinator
Sept 30 – October 7, 2025
Have you volunteered to host,
day host, small group dinner?*

*FFGS Board Meeting, 12-2pm
Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2025*

President’s Letter:

As anticipated, we are having a busy year! We had a great time at the Mariners game. The weather was great; we had a wonderful turnout and the Mariners won. What more could you ask for?

Our picnic on June 22 was also fabulous. The weather was nice and the food as usual was terrific. We had a cherry theme to celebrate Joyce’s continued and amazing recovery from her battle with the cherry tree.

The Costa Rica club will be here on July 3rd. Joyce and Sue have planned a fun week. Please try to join us when you can - the more people, the merrier. If the forecast is correct, we should have perfect weather. Hopefully I didn’t just jinx it.

Our August journey to Manitoba is all set. Pura has done a great job keeping everything on track. We will have lots to share on our return.

Some of the Bundaberg club members will be in Seattle between journeys on August 19 and 20th. There is one couple and 5 single women. It would be great if we have enough volunteers to host them for those 2 nights. If you are interested, please let me know!

Our board meetings for the rest of the year will be: July 23rd 12:00-2:00, September 17th 12:00-2:00, November 19th 12:00-2:00.

Our general meetings will be: August 24th, October 19th, and December 7th, which will be our holiday lunch. We will have more details after our July board meeting.

Please let me know if you would like to be a journey coordinator for next year. I like the idea of having 2 people team up to coordinate. Bob & Pura are coordinating Japan. Hope to see you all as we host Costa Rico!

- - - Judi, FFGS President

“We abhor the totalitarian arrogance which makes one man say that he will respect another man as his equal only if he has ‘my race, my religion, my political views, my social position.’ In our land men are equal, but they are free to be different. From these very differences among our people has come the greatest human and national strength of America.” The Ideal of Freedom and Equality, Excerpt from report of the President’s Committee on Civil Rights, 1947. Copied from President Truman’s Little White House in Key West.

2025 Inbound Journeys:

Alajuela, Costa Rica to Victoria/Vancouver Island, and FF Greater Seattle

Coordinators: Joyce and Sue; July 3 – 10, 2025 – they come this week!

Winnipeg, Canada to FF Greater Seattle and FF Columbia Cascade

Coordinator: Elaine; dates Sept. 30 – Oct. 7, 2025

We are hosting ambassadors from Winnipeg from **September 30 to October 7th. Can you host?** Winnipeg hopes to get at least 10 ambassadors; they have 8 currently. Please let Elaine know if you would like to **host ambassadors**, host a **small group dinner**, or can help with setting up a picnic, welcome, or farewell event. Elaine is open to suggestions for activities!

Outbound Journeys:

FF Greater Seattle to **Manitoba, Canada** –Coordinator: **Pura**

We are ready to go on August 9th, returning August 19th. We have 15 ambassadors for the journey. Judi Smith from Longview will be joining us. A group from Adelaide, Australia, will be having their journey to Manitoba/Winnipeg as well, so we will get to share with them and make new friends! Manitoba has matched ambassadors to hosts; hopefully you have been able to communicate with your host. If you have not, please let Pura know. This should be a fabulous journey! (Manitoba journey #25092)

2026 FFGS Journey Assignments – sign on to be a coordinator!

Inbound: March - **Stratford St. Marys, Canada** to Greater Seattle FF

July - **Greater Cincinnati, USA** to Greater Seattle FF

Outbound: May - GSFF to **Nara and Gifu, Japan**; **Bob & Pura, coordinators**

October – G Seattle to **Greater Orlando, Florida** & **Richmond, VA**

Campfire Stories: Prompts for Igniting Stories by the Fire (a card game)

Fun open questions to ask when participating in a journey

- The most interesting person you've met in your travels
- An object you found and kept from your travels
- A trip that didn't go as planned



Sunday, June 22nd Annual Picnic at Dave & Judi's

What is this?



Mark and Denise were in the new parking lot for the Mariposa Grove of Sequoia trees in Yosemite National Park where they saw this sign. Mark has seen many international signs but never one like this. The park employees at the information desk were stumped as well.

Mark said that there is a prize for anyone that can respond to him with the correct answer!

10 of the Largest Insects in the World

These insects are big enough to give even seasoned entomologists a good fright. Click on the above link to find out more about these fascinating insects!



Titan Beetle



Stick Insect



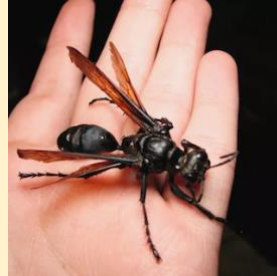
Giant Weta



Goliath Beetle



Atlas Moth



Tarantula Hawk



Mydas Fly



Hercules Beetle



Giant Water Bug



Queen Alexandra's Birdwing

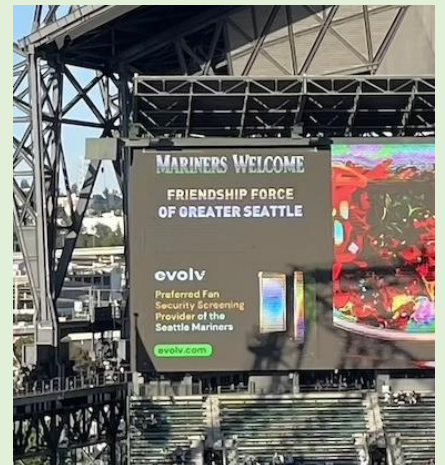
FFGS Social to watch the Seattle Mariners! And, they won 10-1!



Sculptor Gerard Tsutakawa 9' bronze Mitt Outside left field entrance, T-Mobile Park



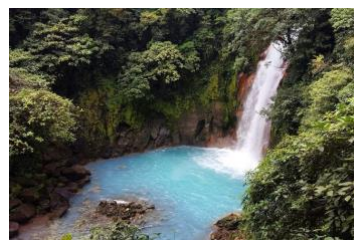
FFGS Social at Mariner's Game!



Mariner's welcome FFGS!

Did You Know - - - Alajuela (Wikipedia.com)

- The first Spanish settlements were established in the area in the 1650s. Alajuela itself was founded in 1782; its population is about 44,000
- The national hero of Costa Rica, Juan Santamaría, was born in Alajuela. His death defending the country in 1856 is celebrated as a national holiday on 11 April each year.
- Alajuela is located in the central valley of Costa Rica about 12-miles northwest of the capital of San Jose, and sits at an elevation of 3,123 feet
- The city has a tropical climate with moderate temperatures averaging 73-79-degrees year round with low humidity. It's known for having *"the best weather in the world."*
- The region produces agricultural products like coffee, sugarcane, citrus and other fruit, plus ornamental plants. Recent developments include investment in free park zones and manufacturing, to include a variety of medical devices
- Alajuela is a sister city to both Downey, California and Dothan, Alabama



Did You Know - - - Costa Rica (Source: Wikipedia.com)

- Is located between Nicaragua and Panama in Central America. Its about the size of New Jersey with a population of five million, two million of whom live in the San José metropolitan area.
- Tourism is a major source of revenue. The country was a pioneer of ecotourism; it ranks as one of the world's Top Ten ethical destinations.
- Costa Rica is known for its rich flora and fauna with some of the greatest biodiversity in Latin America.
- Following a brief civil war in 1948 Costa Rica permanently abolished its army, one of the few countries in the world without one.
- With uninterrupted democratic governments dating to at least 1948 Costa Rica is the region's most stable country.



What is Friendship Force?

Founded in 1977 by visionary Wayne Smith and supported by the late President Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, Friendship force International is a nonprofit cultural organization focused on promoting understanding, cultural education, and citizen diplomacy through homestay journeys and personal friendships. Through these exciting personal encounters, strangers become friends – and we know that by experiencing different views, you can discover common ground.

Local Places Worth Exploring: Alkai Beach! (by Dave)



Dave's HS wrestling coach

Kenmore Rhododendrom Park:

one of the largest public collections of hybrid rhododendrons in the Northwest.



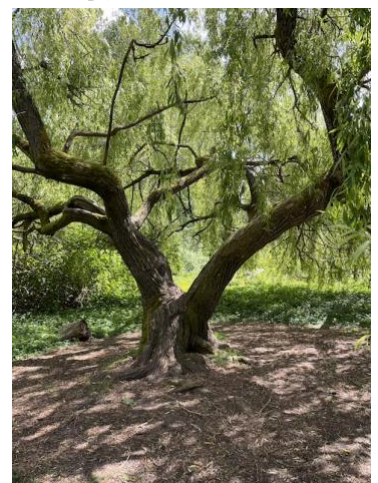
Juanita Bay Park (once a golf course, now a wildlife sanctuary)



Red-winged blackbird



Over 60 turtles all in a row!



Remaining weeping willow

More Local Places Worth Exploring: [Lake Wilderness Arboretum](#)

LAKE WILDERNESS ARBORETUM, BY THE NUMBERS

- 117 Acres, the size of Wilderness Park
- 42 Acres, roughly, the size of Lake Wilderness Arboretum
- 5 Acres of cultivated gardens in Lake Wilderness Arboretum
- 5 Cultivated gardens
- 1965 Year the concept of the arboretum was born
- .5 Miles, length of the outer trail circling the gardens

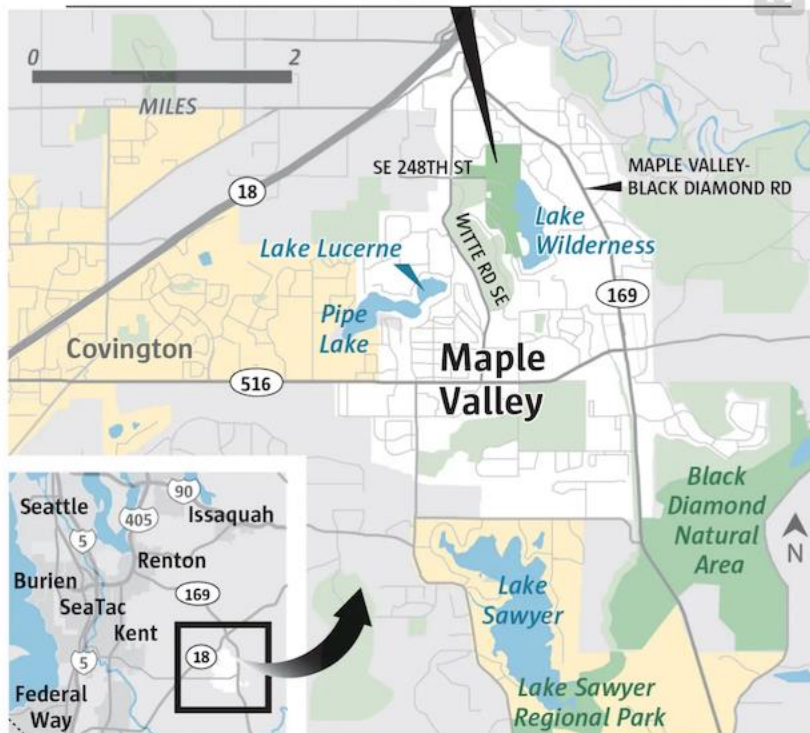
Address: 22520 S.E. 248th St., Maple Valley, WA 98038

Hours: Open every day, dawn to dusk, free.

“The roughly 40-acre Lake Wilderness Arboretum is situated in Lake Wilderness Park, a sprawling 117 acres of outdoor beauty adjacent to the lake itself. And while all of it is gorgeous, including the 26-acre second-growth forest sanctuary, the five-ish acres of cultivated gardens within the Arboretum are particularly special. In the gardens, there are roughly as many flowers as there are trees in residence, and it feels like a set from the Wizard of Oz, with manicured plots and twisting paths (which really should be yellow brick) winding through the shade of primordial-feeling trees, evoking that same liminal zone between the tame and the wild.”

“It is easy to fall for the flowers. The park’s Smith-Mossman Western Azalea Garden contains “one of the largest collection of deciduous western azaleas in the world” according to their website. It’s a collection that began as wee cuttings and become a riot of color in spring and early summer, along with showy hellebores, hydrangeas, irises and fuchsias.”

Lake Wilderness Park and Arboretum



Source: Esri (Mark Nowlin / The Seattle Times)

There’s a new stretch of trail in King County



“King County Parks this month opened a new trail segment that connects Burien and SeaTac to the existing Des Moines Creek Trail. With this opening, two-thirds of the Lake to Sound trail is complete. The trail will eventually connect the southern tip of Lake Washington to Puget Sound.

The stretch, which officially opened June 7, is part of a planned 16-mile-long trail to link five cities — Renton, Tukwila, Burien, SeaTac and Des Moines. It will also connect four other regional trails: Eastrail, Cedar River Trail, Interurban Trail and Green River Trail.”

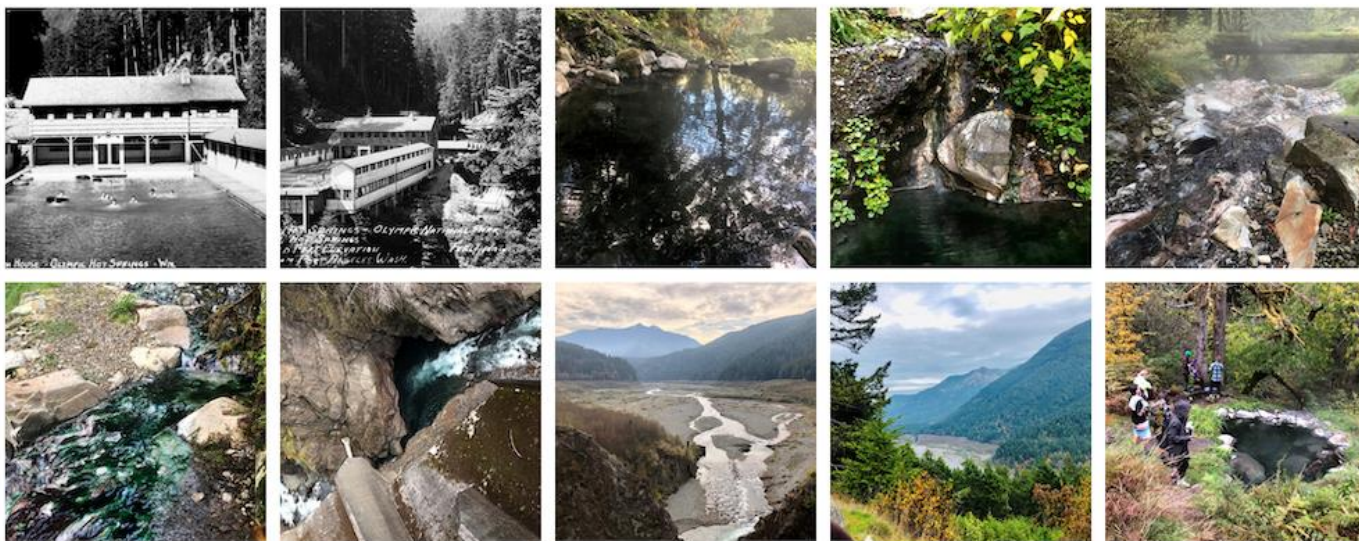
New Member Profile! **Mark and Sue**



Mark and Sue are two of our newest members. Mark grew up in Mukilteo and Sue in Shoreline. They lived in Denver and Iowa for a while before moving back to the area. They now live in Kingston, a short ferry ride from Edmonds, and will be hosting the Costa Rica ambassadors for lunch and a beach walk.

Years ago while living in Denver, they belonged to the Friendship Force of Denver. They enjoyed hosting a couple from Georgia (former Russia) and two women from Japan. They enjoyed having them stay with them and showing them all around the Denver area with their club.

Both are now retired and enjoy traveling and spending time with family and friends. Mark enjoys fishing and Sue likes to do crafts. Welcome to Mark and Sue! We are so happy to welcome them to FFGS!



[Ruby Beach](#) is a stunning beach on the coast of Olympic National Park. It's famous for its reddish sand, sea stacks, and driftwood formations. The beach gets its name from the ruby-like crystals (garnets) found in the sand.

[Snoqualmie Falls](#) (by Karen)

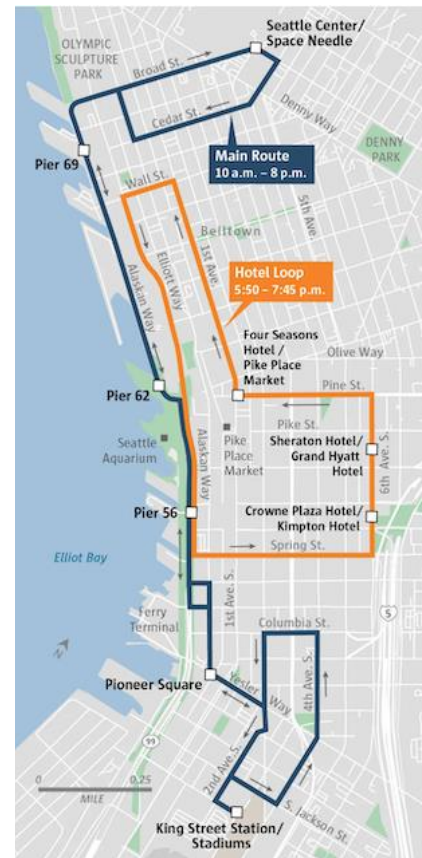


On my last trip to Snoqualmie Falls, I found a small area behind the gift and coffee shop, where a short film plays continuously, showing the Native American history of ownership of the falls. It is interesting & the photography is beautiful. Check it out while enjoying a coffee!

In 2007, the [Muckleshoot](#) tribe purchased the Salish Lodge and planned to build a hotel, conference center, and 175 homes above Snoqualmie Falls. Members of the [Snoqualmie Indian Tribe](#) opposed the project for its proximity to burial grounds and the Snoqualmie Falls.^[5] In 2015, the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe launched the "Save Snoqualmie Falls" campaign. On October 31, 2019, the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe closed on purchasing Snoqualmie Falls, the Salish Lodge and Spa, the Snoqualmie Falls Gift Shop, and 45 acres of property north of and across [State Route 202](#). The tribe purchased it for \$125 million, effectively halting the Muckleshoot's development plans.

Free shuttle returns to a new era of Seattle's waterfront

“The shuttle service operated by TransWest returns this year with three shuttle buses and will run every day through mid-September. With pickups and drop-offs every 20 minutes from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., the service is designed to help people visit the waterfront, featuring stops close to the Seattle Aquarium, Pike Place Market and Colman Dock. Visitors can [catch the shuttle](#) at Seattle Center/Space Needle, Pier 69, Pier 62, Pier 56, Pioneer Square and King Street Station in the Chinatown International District.” “[The park will host more than 270 public events](#) from May - October, including musical performances, fitness classes, cultural festivals & more.” (Below – Overlook Park)



Costa Rica Inbound, July 3 – 10, 2025

10 Ambassadors arrive by Victoria Clipper on July 3rd
Thursday, July 3rd: Arrive via Victoria Clipper (4:15 pm), settle in with hosts
Friday, July 4th: 4th of July activities in Kirkland, 11 am kayaking at Juanita Beach, possible noon Kirkland parade, 1 pm light picnic lunch, walk in Juanita Bay Park, 4 pm **Welcome potluck** at Joe/Joyce home, (appetizers at 4 pm), (optional fireworks)
Saturday, July 5th: 10 am at Kubota Garden, noon **picnic** under plane at Museum of Flight, tour museum, optional visit to Duwamish Longhouse? **Small group dinners**
Sunday, July 6th: Free day with hosts, **take host to dinner**
Monday, July 7th: 10:00 am Space Needle/Chihuly Glass Museum, Monorail to Westlake Mall, Pike Place Market, money for **no host lunch** (market), Monorail back
Tuesday, July 8th: Take 9:35 ferry to Kingston, **beach walk and lunch** at Sue N’s house on Kingston waterfront, visit Poulsbo, take ferry home
Wednesday, July 9th: 11 am: park at Commodore Park, Herron Rookery, Fish Ladder, Ballard Locks, English Garden, 2 pm: **Farewell potluck** at Dave/Judi’s house
Thursday, July 10th: Early flight from SeaTac airport

Friendship Force Pledge

As a member of the Friendship Force
 I recognize that I can make a difference
 I recognize that I have a mission
 That mission is to be a friend of the people of the world.
 As I embark on this adventure,
 I know that others will be watching me
 I know that through my example
 to my fellow citizens
 And the people of other nations
 The cause of friendship, love,
 and peace will be furthered
I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Gardening tip!

Trader Joe’s has a variety of organic herb plants that can be used in the kitchen and then planted in the garden. The West Seattle store has basil, thyme, rosemary, mint, & oregano for \$2.99 each.

Travel Pictures from the Florida Keys ...



Key Biscayne 1855 Cape Florida Lighthouse & beach

Underground Railroad Site Designation

In the early 1820's, enslaved Africans, runaways, and "Black Seminoles" seeking freedom from slave catchers and plantation masters, secretly worked their way down to Cape Florida. They met with bold captains of sloops from the British Bahamas who offered transportation across the Gulf Stream. In 1821, some 300 freedom seekers bartered for passage aboard 27 sloops or chose to sail Indian dugout canoes 107 nautical miles to secluded Andros Island. The Cape Florida Lighthouse in 1825 effectively blocked the escape route.



Key Largo beach stay, kayaking in mangroves, and tourist tree (turns red and peels ...)



Key West



Southernmost point – 90 miles to Cuba



Beginning of Highway 1 North



Hemingway House in Key West



Truman 'Little White House'
Built in 1890, it became a single family residence in 1911. President William Howard Taft visited in 1912. Franklin Roosevelt visited in 1917, 1926, and 1939. President Harry S Truman used this house for 175 days during his administration of 1945 – 1953. He spent 11 working vacations here and the building became known as the Little White House.



A modern wonder, the 113 miles of roadway from Key Largo to Key West incorporates an astonishing 42 bridges leapfrogging from key to key in a series of giant arches of concrete and steel over the open waters of the Atlantic Ocean, Florida Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.

Ernest Hemingway quotes:

“There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self.”

My aim is to put down on paper what I see & what I feel in the best and simplest way.”

“The best people possess a feeling for beauty, the courage to take risks, the discipline to tell the truth, the capacity for sacrifice.”

Have you ever wished for something and then had it come true in an unexpectedly unique way? After two fabulous FFGS journeys in 2025 to New Zealand and then Cuba/Florida, I really longed to stay in Seattle for the summer. We all know that the PNW is kind of a little slice of paradise during these long summer days. June 3rd, my wish came true when I fell from our 33 year old cherry tree. We now have unique ways of picking the cherries.



How to Seattle

“The Emerald City is filled with delights, from proximity to natural beauty to a bustling food-and-drink scene and [countless other attractions](#). How to make time to try a fair share of them?

A group of Seattleites recently tried doing many of them in one day, embarking on the ultimate outdoor and sightseeing adventure, dubbed [the Seattle heptathlon](#). The 15-plus-hour affair included kayaking, biking and skiing, plus stops for coffee, beer and seafood. While this group may have bent the rules by including more than seven events (it was actually 15), we asked readers what they would include in their own version of the heptathlon. Here’s what they have to say. Take your pick among them to form your own Seattle heptathlon!”

Here are some of their suggestions:

Beth’s Café on Aurora Avenue North, is known for its massive 12-egg omelets

Jack’s Fish Spot in Pike Place Market

Reuben’s Brews in Ballard

Agua Verde Café for margaritas on their Portage Bay patio

The Nest – a downtown bar with stunning views of the waterfront

Alki Beach – a perfect kayaking launch spot

Seattle’s ferries – for a day trip to islands in the Sound

Ballard’s 108-year old locks – the nation’s busiest, you can watch or view from a kayak!

Seward Park, Gas Works, Golden Gardens, or other Seattle parks

Seattle has a brand-new waterfront bike path! Or, take a trip around Green Lake

Snoqualmie Falls has a great observation deck and is open year-round

Check out Seattle’s many stairways, including the one on upper Queen Anne to Kerry Park

For pockets of nature, check out Washington Park Arboretum, Volunteer Park, Burke-Gilman Trail

Space Needle, Chihuly Garden and Glass and monorail to Pike Place Market

*End by catching a Mariner’s Game! ***(Does any of this sound familiar to FFGS club members?)****

“Here in the corner attic of America, two hours’ drive from a rain forest, a desert, a foreign country, an empty island, a hidden fjord, a raging river, a glacier, and a volcano, is a place where the inhabitants sense they can do no better, nor do they want to.”— Timothy Egan, American author