



friendship force
INTERNATIONAL



Our last Inbound Journey for 2025!

Winnipeg, Canada to FF Columbia Cascade and FF Greater Seattle

Coordinators: Elaine and Bob; dates October 9 – 15, 2025

Elaine is looking for more day hosts as well as helpers for the Welcome and Farewell dinners.

Denise is looking for small group dinner hosts. Email either of them to help!

The Friendship Force of Greater Seattle Newsletter #62 September 1, 2025

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

Winnipeg, Canada Inbound
Elaine – coordinator, Oct 9-15

FFGS General Meeting
Sunday, Oct 19th 2 – 4 pm.

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

FFGS Holiday Lunch
Sunday, Dec 7th
Des Moines Anthony’s

Do you have a Social Activity idea? Email Mark F if you have an idea to share!

We have some great inbound/outbound exchanges coming up in 2026! This would be a great time to invite friends or family to join FFGS!

President’s Letter:

We have just about made it through the summer. The visit from Costa Rica was wonderful. Joyce and Sue did a fabulous job coordinating this inbound exchange. The people were wonderful and everyone pitched in to make it a really fun time. With every journey we learn a few more tricks to make it the best.

The outbound journey to Manitoba was really fun! Pura did a great job organizing this. The coordinators from Manitoba were exceptionally brave. They combined our visit with an additional 10 people from Australia for a total of 25 people. This was great fun for us but a little crazy for them. Everything came off perfectly.

Our last inbound for this year will be Winnipeg in October. It is a small group but we want to convince them that visiting the US is still okay. I am sure that they will have a wonderful time. Elaine is putting together a great agenda. Please be sure to volunteer to day host, host a small group dinner, help with the welcome/farewell, etc. We all play a part in making these exchanges so much fun.

I am still recruiting coordinators for 2026. It is time to start planning for a great year. Being a coordinator can be lots of fun as everyone is ready to jump in and help. Feel free to join us at our board meeting September 17th at the Shoreline library at noon. Coordinators become a part of the board to help facilitate the exchange.

- - - *Judi, FFGS President*

It’s Still Summer through September 21st!

“If I were an Instagram influencer, I’d create the #equinoctialchallenge:

Do one defiantly summer-specific thing every day between Labor Day and the equinox. Go to the beach, pick berries, wade in a creek.” *Melissa Kirsch, The New York Times*

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

Inbound: March 2026 - **Stratford St. Marys, Canada** to Greater Seattle FF
We are looking for co-coordinators for this journey! Grab a buddy and volunteer! It is really fun to do as a team!

July 2026 - **Greater Cincinnati, USA** to Greater Seattle FF
*We are also looking for co-coordinators for this inbound! We want to be sure that all club members get a chance to try this out!
 Let Judi know if you are interested.*

Outbound: May 2026 - GSFF to **Nara and Gifu, Japan; Bob & Pura**

Our outbound to Japan will take place between mid-May and mid-June in 2026. Exact dates, times, and activities are yet to be determined. The Gifu club can host 12 ambassadors while Nara can host 15. The private tour to Hokkaido for 7-10 days is being planned for 15 people.

Americans aren't required to get visas for Japan for stays less than 90 days; but, a declaration form is recommended and completed on line prior to entering Japan. Let Pura and Bob know if you're if interested in the Japan outbound and if you plan to attend each activity.

October 2026 – G Seattle to **Greater Orlando, Florida & Richmond, VA**
Let Judi know if you and a friend would like to coordinate this inbound exchange. As always, club members are happy to help with lots of items such as picnics, brochure, possible schedules, budgeting, etc. It's a lot of fun!

Do You Have a Senior Gold Card? Ask at the desk of any Seattle Public Library!

Here are some of the amazing deals using the gold card (age 60+)

- ***Seattle Aquarium: 75% off entrance***
- ***Seattle Art Museum: \$5 admission includes access to everything on view.***
- ***Seattle Asian Art Museum: \$5 admission access to everything on view.***
- ***The Museum of Flight: \$22 admission (25% off)***
- ***Woodland Park Zoo: 75% off full price admission. One discount per card.***
- ***Last Resort Fire Department Museum: Free admission. Open every Thursday.***
- ***UW School of Music: Up to two free tickets to select UW School of Music concerts call (206)-543-4800 24+ hours prior to the show, (info at: music.washington.edu/upcoming)***

Individual (couple) FFI journey opportunities

Did you know that you can sign up for individual journeys as well as special and group journeys? An individual journey is where someone in Friendship Force is willing to host individuals, couples, or families at dates that are negotiated between the host and the ambassadors. Special journeys are journeys usually open to any FF member where the incoming ambassadors sign up individually instead of as part of their club. Group journeys are the typical club-to-club exchange, but often there are extra spaces that any FF member can try for at the last minute. To see options for 2025 and 2026, go to the [Friendship Force website](#).

Recipe Corner – *Gluten free suggestions*

Cousin Sue's Gainless Granola (Joyce & Karen's cousin, Sue)

- 2 cups pecan pieces
- 2 cups pumpkin seeds
- 2 cups slivered almonds
- 2 cups sunflower seeds (raw)
- ¼ cup flaxseed
- 2 cups coconut flakes
- 4 tsp cinnamon
- ½ cup coconut oil
- 1 cup monk fruit sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Bake for 20 minutes, then stir every 10 minutes until brown

Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Cookies - Joyce

- 2 cups almond flour
 - 2 cups oatmeal
 - 1 tsp baking soda
 - 1 tsp cinnamon
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 1 cup butter (melted)
 - 2 eggs
 - 2 tsp vanilla
 - 2 cups chocolate chips
- Mix together dry ingredients
- Add eggs, vanilla, and butter - mix
- Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.

Freezing fresh caught crab – Mark

Place the crab in a zip lock bag and cover with whole milk (2% or skim will work, but the higher milk fat works better).

When you want to use the crab, place the frozen crab in a colander and let the milk melt. The crab will taste almost like fresh!

Zucchini Fritters: (Costco Connection)

- 3 ½ cups grated zucchini
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cu nutritional yeast
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 3 scallions, chopped
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- Maple syrup or honey, for serving

Grate the zucchini into a mixing bowl with 1 tsp salt. Set aside for 10 minutes to let the salt remove excess water. With your hands, squeeze water out of the zucchini, and place in the bowl. Mix in flour, yeast, baking powder, 1/2 tsp crushed garlic, and scallions. Add melted butter & mix into the batter. Add olive oil to a flattop grill or a pan over medium-high heat. Once hot, scoop fritter batter using a ¼ cup measure onto the grill or pan. Press down with a spatula until fritters are as flat as possible. Cook for 3 minutes per side, or until golden brown. Transfer fritters to a baking sheet and place in a 225 F oven until ready to serve. Serve with syrup or honey. About 8 servings. (Andrew Schaefer)

Did You Know - - - Gifu, Japan

Gifu (Gee' foo)

- Played a strategic role in Japan's history because of its central location in the country, its estimated population in 2019 was 401,534.
- Gifu Castle on Mt. Kinka is where warlord Oda Nobunaga planned the unification of Japan in the 16th century, it has one of the most impressive views of any castle in Japan.
- Ukai fishing, a 1,300-year-old tradition, takes place at night by firelight. Master fishermen use cormorants to catch fish which they drop in the boat. The birds are rewarded with every eighth fish.
- Gifu has been a sister city of Cincinnati, Ohio since 1988.
- The average high temperature in May is 58-degrees with an average of 7.5 inches of rain.



Did You Know - - - Nara, Japan

Nara (Naa'la)

- Was the capital of Japan from 710 to 784, its population in 2022 was 367,000.
- Due to its large number of historical temples and national monuments Nara was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list in 1998.
- Nara holds traditional festivals every year including a spring festival held for over 1,000 years; people wear costumes ranging across 700 years and play traditional games.
- Tame Sika Deer roam throughout the town with more than 1,200 in 2015. Vendors sell deer crackers - senbei, for visitors to feed the deer, some have learned to bow in order to receive senbei from people.
- Certain deer have become aggressive towards humans in their solicitation of food, tourists may want to consider just watching and not feeding them.
- The average temperature in May is 65-degrees with an average of 5.5 inches of rain.



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.

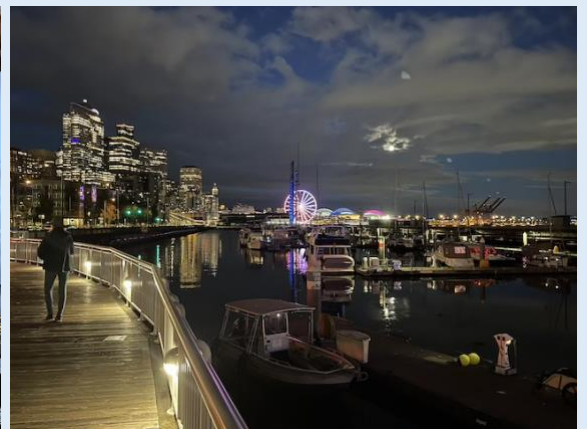
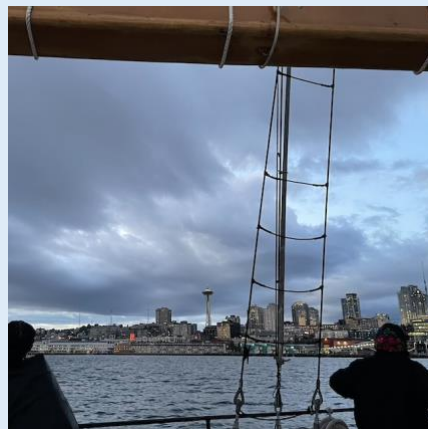
Local Places Worth Exploring: Sammamish River



REI deal: Apparently, it was returned because the "kayak didn't go straight when paddled". Perhaps "operator error"?



Sunset Sail on 85' Bay Lady from Seattle's Pier 66



100 mile Idaho Lower Salmon River White Water Rafting Trip – Mark and Carol



Bundaberg Short Visit – August 19th – 21st



Costco Connection Seattle Area suggestions:

- *How about a stroll along the beautiful Seattle waterfront? Be sure to include a visit to the historic Pike Place Market. Established in 1907, the market features spectacular shopping and restaurants, with some 500 stores.*
- *The Washington Park Arboretum shows off stunning plants and trees. The Japanese Garden within the park is stunningly beautiful.*
- *Waterfall Garden Park is a mini-park in the historic Pioneer Square area of town.*
- *You'll find more than 125 wineries in Woodinville, roughly 22 miles from downtown Seattle. Chateau Ste. Michelle operates a pretty wine estate with tastings, tours and summer concerts.*
- *The Kirkland waterfront, almost 12 miles from downtown Seattle, has lovely parks on Lake Washington. It is also close to galleries, restaurants and shops. The 5.75 mile Cross Kirkland Corridor has a crushed gravel trail that's great for walking or cycling.*
- *Located about 28 miles from Seattle, Snoqualmie Falls is a 268 foot waterfall that sends waves of white water over a dark rock precipice. You can enjoy the view from above, but there's also a trail that will take you to viewing platforms for a closer look.*



Fruits of Summer

Costa Rica Inbound! Celebrating the 4th of July



Bob's neighbor's 4th of July breakfast



4th of July picnic at Juanita Beach



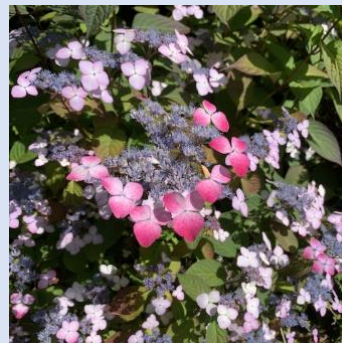
Walker as a sturdy garbage container



FFGS shows up with kayaks!



Tandem kayaking at Juanita Beach Park



Enjoying the beauty and tranquility of Kubota Gardens



Off to catch a plane at the Museum of Flight



The MiG-21 Project – covered in tens of millions of colorful glass beads



Yogi Tea Advice: The purpose of life is to know yourself, love yourself, trust yourself, and be yourself.

Costa Rica Inbound continued ...



You can't buy happiness. But you can buy a plane ticket to Costa Rica, and that's basically the same thing.

Costa Rica Inbound continued ...



Manitoba Outbound: August 9 – 16, 2025



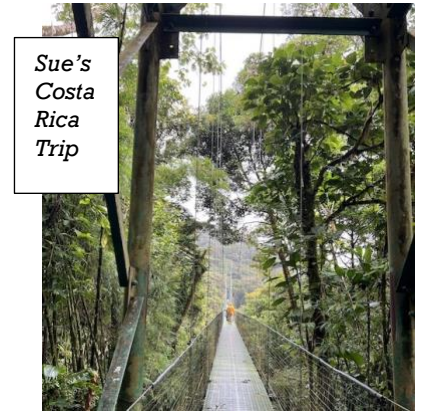
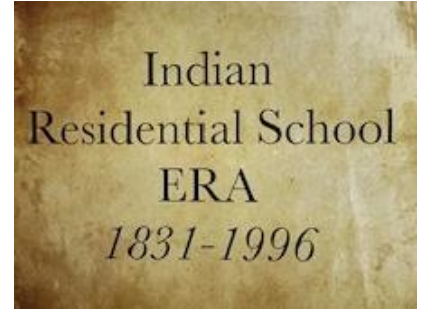
Manitoba (continued)

These comments are from the 'Curiosities Factoids' pamphlet, which was created in Winnipeg, Canada. We received this in our welcome bags from the Manitoba club (a different club than the Winnipeg club, even they do some things together).

- *The Red River Mutual Trail is one of the world's longest naturally frozen skating trails. It made the Guinness Book of World Records in 2008 at 8.54 km long. In 2017, the river trail was expanded to over 10km. The river ice is groomed, so that it is smooth.*
- *The Winnipeg Folk Festival was established in 1974. Originally planned as a one-time event to celebrate Winnipeg's centennial, this annual event is one of the oldest and largest folk festivals in the world.*
- *Folklorama is the largest and longest-running multicultural festival of its kind in the world. Over 40 volunteer-run pavilions participate each year, showcasing culture through lively entertainment, cultural displays, warm hospitality and authentic ethnic cuisine.*
- *In 1914, Harry Colebourn, a World War I captain from Winnipeg, took a black bear cub to England as his regiment's mascot. When Colebourn shipped out for France, he donated the bear, named Winnie after his hometown, to the London Zoo. Author A. A. Milne and his son Christopher Robin loved 'Winnie the Bear'. Milne crafted the much-adored stories about his boy and the bear, Winnie the Pooh.*
- *Winnipeg's Royal Canadian Mint produces every single Canadian circulation coin. Established in 1976, it has also minted more than 55 billion coins for more than 75 countries around the world. They actually make some US coins when there is a need.*
- *The cell phone was invented by Winnipegger Martin Cooper.*
- *Winnipeg is situated at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers. Winnipeg means muddy water in the Cree language.*
- *At the time of construction in 1968, the Winnipeg Floodway was the second-largest earth-moving project in the world after the Panama Canal. It has saved the city from flooding many times since constructed by then-Premier Duff Roblin. It is affectionately referred to as "Duff's Ditch". Winnipeg is very flat!*



Manitoba Continued ...



Sue's Costa Rica Trip

Tenino, Thurston County (an old quarry-turned-municipal pool)
“The aptly named Quarry Swimming Pool is a unique Washington freshwater swimming hole that also comes with amenities like lifeguards, bathrooms and seating. Plunging some 100 feet deep, the spring-fed pool runs 57-58 degrees, roughly Puget Sound temperatures, even in the dog days of summer. But on a scorching day, swimming out to the man-made waterfall, with ferns and moss dripping down the quarry walls, feels like an escape to a Costa Rican jungle cascade.”

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



Source: Esri (Mark Nowlin / The Seattle Times)

Whidbey Island top Four Places

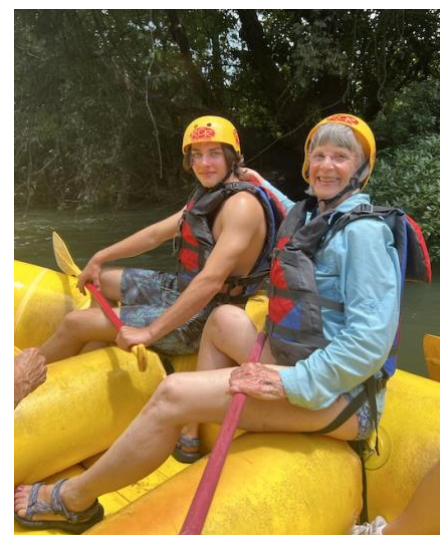
Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve: The beach is wide and flat but leads to a trail up and around the bluffs that makes for an excellent 3.6-mile hiking loop, with incredible views of Mount Baker and Vancouver Island in the distance.

Fort Casey State Park: Construction on the formidable Fort Casey began in 1897 and was completed in just four years in 1901. Along with Fort Worden at Port Townsend and Fort Flagler on Marrowstone Island, Casey was built with the idea to defend Puget Sound and Seattle through a triangulated field of fire through which no ship could hope to pass. Then, in 1903, the airplane was invented and suddenly all three forts became obsolete.

Deception Pass State Park: Deception Pass is often referred to as the "crown jewel" of Washington state parks. Few places in the state are as sublimely beautiful or as easy to access and enjoy.

Greenbank Farm: Originally a dairy farm at the beginning of the 20th century, Greenbank Farm now hosts a wonderfully diverse collection of wine, cheese and pie shops, as well as birding trails and beautifully maintained garden spaces. It's a great place for those who enjoy the outdoors but also appreciate some of the finer things that life has to offer. It was acquired by the Port of Coupeville in 1997.

Sue's trip to Costa Rica!



Enjoy these pictures from Sue's Road Scholar trip to Costa Rica with her grandson. It looks like it was really fun!

Save the Date!

Back by popular demand, we will be having our FFGS Christmas luncheon at Anthony's in Des Moines on Sunday, December 7, 2025. Start searching for your perfect white elephant gift and watch for more details, soon!

Light rail coming to Federal Way in December!

Sound Transit's light rail trains will roll an additional 8 miles south to Federal Way starting Saturday, Dec. 6, fulfilling a promise first made to the community nearly two decades ago. An estimated 18,000 to 23,000 passengers per day are expected to board at new Kent Des Moines, Star Lake and Federal Way Downtown stations. When the extension opens, commuters can ride from Federal Way to downtown Seattle in about 50 minutes.