

friendship force
INTERNATIONAL



Happy New Year
and 12th Day of
Christmas!
Our 2024 New
Year Resolution?
More traveling!



The Friendship Force of Greater Seattle Newsletter #52 January 6, 2024

FFGS Board Meeting
1/17/24 noon – 2 pm
Mercer Island Library

FFGS General Meeting
Sun, Feb 18th 2 – 4 pm
*John Loacker, owner of
Kroll & Metsker Maps*

May 12-19, 2024
Montreal, Canada
Inbound- Joyce & Sue
co-coordinators

Harrisburg, PA
Inbound
July 19, 2024
Host Coordinator:
Judi Dellino

Cincinnati Inbound
Sept/Oct, 2024
Coordinator needed!

President’s Comments: Happy New Year!

2024 is shaping up to be another fun and busy travel year! I will be sending in our preferences for 2025 to Atlanta next week since Bob gave me our list from last year. If you have any input, please let me know.

We need a journey coordinator for our trip to Cincinnati in September. The Cincinnati coordinator is anxious to get the dates and other details nailed down. We will be hosting Montreal in May and Harrisburg in July. Please let Joyce and Sue know if you can host for Montreal and let me know if you can host for Harrisburg in July!

Our next general meeting will be on Sunday, February 18th from 2 – 4 pm. John Loacker, owner of Kroll Maps and Metsker Maps, will be sharing stories, information, and history from the perspective of a 3rd generation map maker. Location to be decided soon.

Mark and the social committee are working on some great social opportunities. Stay tuned for more information. Of course, if you have a suggestion, please pass that info along to Mark or others on the social committee!

- - - **Judi , President FFGS**

“I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.” Thomas Jefferson

“What a wonderful thought it is that some of the best days of our lives haven’t happened yet.” Anne Frank

2024 – the best intentions, Bree Coven

“I have lived in 12 cities and traveled to 10 countries, but I’ve never experienced this kind of natural beauty anywhere else. The trifecta of mountains, greenery and water gets me every time.” [Bree Coven from The Seattle Times](#) (“The best intentions, a guide for starting the new year with affirmations, healthy rituals”).

Bree Coven lives in West Seattle.

For those of you contemplating or trying not to do new year resolutions, here is a quote from her article that I especially like:

“I never liked the idea of New Year’s resolutions. They seem unitive somehow – about all the ways you’re not good enough: you have to lose weight, keep a cleaner home, get better with money, be a nicer person. It all screams that you’re not OK the way you are, which immediately shuts down any motivations on my part and makes me stop before I start, defeated. Hope is what brings out my best, with a side of positivity and radical acceptance. So, instead of resolutions, I prefer affirmations; What do I like about myself, about my life, that I want to attract more of in the new year? And how can I make this happen?”

What Seattle Times readers caught on camera in 2023

“The Pacific Northwest is filled with wonders of every kind, from breathtaking nature to glorious architecture. Reader’s Lens contributors have captured it all once again, from the mountains to the Sound and many points in between. From breaching orcas to a 737 streaking across the moon, and from the macro to the cosmic, our readers have outdone themselves with stunning individual images that together compose a perfectly Pacific Northwest mosaic. There might even be some humor to be found, as well.” - - - Travis Ness. [\(Click on the link and scroll through 46 incredible photos.\)](#)



Did You Know? - - - Cincinnati

Source: *Wikipedia*

- Was founded in 1819, is Ohio's largest metropolitan area with an estimated population of 2,265,051.
- Cincinnati is home to Kroger and Procter and Gamble with General Electric having a significant local presence.
- Cincinnati Chili is a local favorite, a spiced sauce served over noodles or spaghetti, usually topped with cheese and often with diced onions and/or beans. It's ordered by number.
- The average high in September is 79-degrees with an average low of 57 and 3.1 inches of rain.
- Oktoberfest Zinzinnati in late September is billed as the largest Oktoberfest in the United States, attracting an estimated 500,000 visitors each year.
- Cincinnati's airport is located across the Ohio River in Boone County, KY.



Did you know that Dec. 31, 2023 was Waltz Day?

December 31, 2023, or 12/31/23, was Waltz Day!

A day like this is unique, occurring only once a century.

For many, this will be the only time in their life they see this kind of date. The date can be parsed as: One-two-three, one-two-three ... just like the timing of the waltz dance!

What should you have done on 12/31/23? Why, check your watch at 01:02:03 of course! You had two chances to do that, by the way. - - - Bill Petro



2024 Inbound and Outbound Journeys!

Montreal, Canada Inbound: May 12 – 19, 2024

Co-coordinators Joyce and Sue are looking for hosts for this exciting inbound journey. We will also be putting together the activity schedule and are open to input from you of activities to include. More info to come!

Harrisburg, PA Inbound: July 19, 2024

Barbara Blakistone (member of both FFGS and the Harrison club) and other Harrisburg club members are coming to Seattle! Judi will be the coordinator and would love help with the host assignments and other items for the journey. Judi is also looking for club members willing to host.

Cincinnati, OH Outbound:

The timing for this journey is negotiable. We need a coordinator for this exciting fall journey (September or October?). If interested, let Judi know. And of course, others are happy to help and support you!

Sunday, February 18, 2024, FFGS presents [John Loacker](#), owner of Kroll Maps and co-owner of Metsker Maps.

Kroll Map Company (founded in 1911) has been in John's family since 1920. It was bought by his grandfather. His dad worked there for 72 years until his stroke and retirement in 1992. John started working there at 11 and took over the business after his dad's stroke.



Dreaming of a trip to Europe this year?

Join Rick Steves for a live [Travel Festival](#) on Sunday, January 21st, at the Edmonds Center for the Arts. This fun travel extravaganza covers the latest travel tips and information about small-group bus tours for the following European destinations:

- 3 – 4 pm Spain and Portugal
- 4:30 pm Scotland and Ireland
- 6 pm Germany, Austria, and Switzerland
- 7:30 pm Italy

It's **free to attend** but space is limited so [reserve your seat in advance](#).



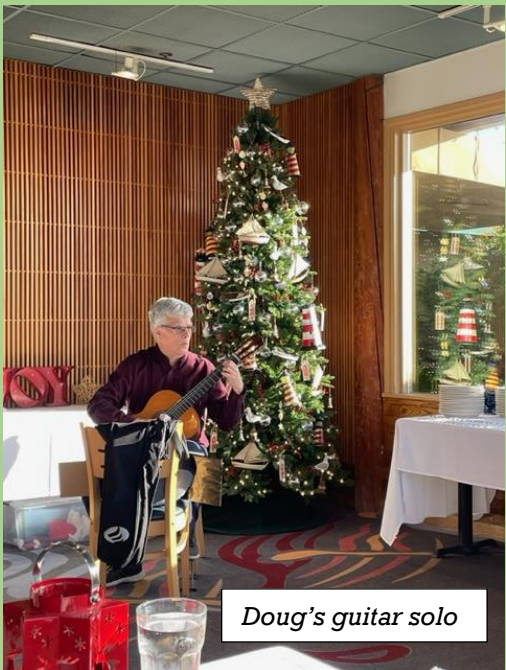
AND they're throwing a [European travel festival](#) January 22 to 29, and you're invited! Over the course of eight fun-filled and information-packed evenings, we'll take a **virtual trip** across Europe. It's free, and it's fun — a celebration of Europe designed to help turn your 2024 travel dreams into smooth and affordable reality, whether on a Rick Steves bus tour or on your own. [Free and on Zoom. Register.](#)



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

2023 White Elephant Gift Exchange and Christmas Luncheon!



Doug's guitar solo



Yummy dessert platters



White elephant gift



Stolen item (regifted)

2nd FFGS Troll Sighting – West Seattle (11/4/23)



Several FFGS members checked out the [West Seattle Senior Center monthly Piano Bar](#) – hosted by a local musician with friends. Mark has suggested this as a fun social activity for a future first Thursday evening of the month starting at 7 pm.

Local and International Travel Photos



Beautiful wildflowers from the mountains outside Mexico City, Mexico



So much water flowing over Snoqualmie Falls



Monte Alban near Oaxca, Mexico. These ruins were occupied from 800 BC until the 1500s AD.

Welcome new FFGS members, Barbara and John Beaton!

John and Barbara are both from the east coast – John from the Bronx, NY and Barb across the Hudson River in New Jersey. They both attended college in Michigan, though different schools. They met in San Diego, CA on a coed softball team in 1977, started dating in 1980, and married in 1983. They have two children: Andrew (m. Genevieve) with three children living in Seattle and Kelsey (long time partner Derran) who live off the grid in Stevens county. Both John and Barb retired in 2015.

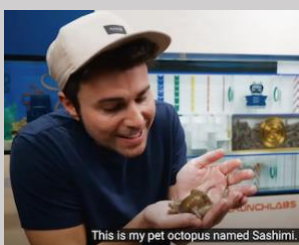


John and Barb took many vacations to the Pacific Northwest because they were enamored with the area. They finally got the opportunity to move to Spokane in 1996. It was a little tough the first year, but they really fell in love with the place. They are very outdoorsy and enjoy the many activities that the area has to offer: snowshoeing and cross country skiing; mountain and road biking; hiking and walking and kayaking. Since retirement, they have added pickleball. Barb also likes to wander around the yard and pull weeds and transplant things that grow wild in the yard. They both enjoy reading, attending lectures, concerts and plays and having fun with friends and family. They also volunteer with World Relief, city and county libraries, and local conservation groups.

Barb and John joined Friendship Force in 2014 after reading an article in the newspaper about EWN (Eastern Washington/North Idaho) club. They enjoy traveling and thought this was a wonderful way to meet new people and learn about different cultures and history in the US and around the world. They have visited New Zealand, Vietnam, Canada, and Spain and took a Sea Cruise to Norway, Iceland and Scotland with FF. They have also traveled to several countries in Europe and have taken two European river cruises. The most recent was a Viking river cruise from Prague to Paris to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary.

John has served as Vice President and President with the EWN FF club and Barbara does the newsletter. They enjoy hosting ambassadors and participating in the inbound journeys. Currently they are splitting their time between Spokane and Seattle to spend more time with their grandchildren – while the grandchildren are still young, and John and Barb are not old.

Entertaining Video to watch:
[Octopus vs Underwater Maze](#)



This is my pet octopus named Sashimi.

Seattle Waterfront



Winter camelias



Pura shares her photo of "The Kiss" by Gustav Klimt in Vienna 2 weeks ago!

7 ways to make your guest room feel like a luxury hotel

“On top of my own experience, I asked professional designers, all consummate hosts, for their best tips on creating a hotel-like guest room in your very own home.” Kathryn O’Shea-Evans

Have Wi-Fi passwords and phone chargers handy

Leave plenty of snacks – welcome trays

Dress the bed in layers with nice sheets - luxurious

Supply reading material – select books to read

Supply easy caffeine access – i.e. a coffee station

Arrange tiptop toiletries – provide a basket with items

Let them be – let them get some R&R

Nine Dazzling Celestial Events to Watch in 2024

Sky watchers can expect spectacular meteor showers, a comet soaring past Earth and a long-anticipated total solar eclipse

December 12, 2023, to January 12, 2024: Quadrantid meteor shower

April 8: Total solar eclipse (path at right)

April 16 to April 25: Lyrids meteor shower

April 15 to May 27: Eta Aquarid meteor shower

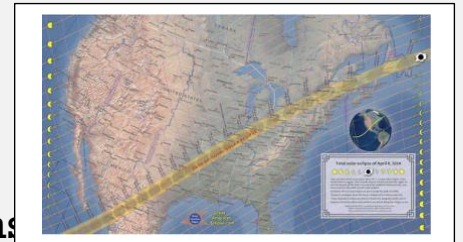
August 11 to August 13: Perseid meteor shower

September 18: Partial lunar eclipse

October 12 – 19th: Comet Tsuchinshan-ATLAS pas

September 26 to November 22: Orionid meteor shower

December 4 to December 17: The Geminid meteor shower



HOKUSAI: INSPIRATION AND INFLUENCE

on display at the Seattle Art Museum through January 21st



This major exhibition pairs more than 100 of his woodblock prints, paintings, and illustrated books from the MFA’s renowned collection with more than 200 works by his teachers, students, rivals, and admirers.

Jumpei Mitsui built this Lego 3D model of Hokusai’s, “The Great Wave” painting. It has over 50 thousand Lego pieces and took 400 hours to build. It is on loan from Hankyu Museum in Osaka.

FFI pays tribute to Rosalynn Carter



This post was sent from FFI on November 20, 2023. Rosalynn Carter was such an integral part of Friendship Force and will be missed by many.

Today, Friendship Force International pays tribute to a remarkable woman whose indelible mark on our organization will forever be cherished. Former First Lady, Rosalynn Carter, [peacefully passed away at the age of 96](#) yesterday. Mrs. Carter, shown in the photograph above with FFI founder Wayne Smith, played a pivotal role in the establishment and nurturing of our organization during its formative years and served as our Honorary Chairperson until 2002. Alongside her husband, President Jimmy Carter, she exemplified the strength of kitchen table diplomacy and the transformative power of friendship.

Rosalynn Carter's legacy extends beyond her contributions to Friendship Force International. She will always be fondly remembered by so many for her generosity, kindness, and wisdom. In this moment of profound loss, Friendship Force International extends our heartfelt condolences to President Carter and the entire Carter family. May the memories of Mrs. Carter's extraordinary life bring comfort and solace to all during this difficult time.

[Smithsonian Magazine:](#) (Click on the link to view)

See 25 Breathtaking Images from the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Contest!