

**Happy 250th
Birthday,
USA!**



Toasting in Nara with Sake

The Friendship Force of Greater Seattle Newsletter #67 July 1, 2026

FFGS Upcoming Events

July 22, 2026 Board Meeting
Noon – 2 pm (location to be announced soon)

August General Meeting to be scheduled soon!

August 19-25, 2026, Cincinnati Inbound, Karen/Joyce Coordinators

**Oct 22–Oct 29 Richmond, VA
Oct 31–Nov 6th Orlando, FL
Ilene & Sue N coordinators**

Sunday, December 6, 2026
Annual Christmas luncheon
Save this date at Anthonv's HP

2027 Journey Assignments:
Inbound: Isle of Wright to Lethbridge, CA, FFGS, and Columbia Cascade; August?

November?: SW Florida

Outbound: FFGS to Montreal, CA and Connecticut, USA: June 2027

President's Letter: Happy July and July 4th!

Our travelers returned from Japan with wonderful stories and memories. The hospitality of the 2 clubs in Japan was amazing. Bob and Pura did a fantastic job coordinating.

The Mariners came through with a win for our annual baseball adventure. We had 24 attendees. The weather was perfect so we couldn't ask for more. Thanks to Dave for keeping us organized.

This Sunday we had a fabulous early 4th of July picnic. We had a beautiful site on the shores of Lake Washington at Covenant Shores. Thank you Ilene and Don. The food was amazing. Thank you to all the cooks and coordinators. It was truly a feast. The social team out did themselves. Check out the decorations and flowers in the pictures.

Next up Cincinnati will be here. Karen and Joyce have put together a great agenda. Let Karen know if you would like to host a small group dinner or day host. Be sure to join in on the welcome or farewell parties.

Our domestic outbound journey is to Reston, Virginia and Orlando, Florida. Thanks Ilene & Sue for coordinating.

So much going on! Looking forward to the return of the sun.

- - - **Judi, FFGS President**

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.

2026 FFGS Journey Assignments – Let’s travel!

Outbound: Oct 22 – 29th: **Richmond, VA** & Oct 31–Nov 6, 2026: **Greater Orlando, FL**

Thank you to Ilene and Sue N for coordinating this trip!

Barbara & Debra B, Denise & Mark F, Dave & Judi, Doug & Sharon, Joe & Joyce, Don & Ilene, Mark & Sue N, Keith & Eleanor, and Karen are going to Richmond, Virginia.

Dave & Judi, Doug & Sharon, Joe & Joyce, Don & Ilene, Keith & Eleanor, and Karen are going to Orlando, Florida.

Inbound: **August 19 – 25, 2026** - Greater Cincinnati, USA to Greater Seattle FF
Karen and Joyce are co-coordinators for this inbound exchange. We are so looking forward to hosting Cincinnati who hosted us September 2024.

Welcome to Seattle, Cincinnati FF Club August 19-25th!

<i>August 19-25, 2026</i>	<i>Cincinnati Inbound Journey</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Day 1 Wednesday, Aug 19th Arrival Day</i>	Arrive in Seattle 6:00 pm – Welcome dinner at Joe and Joyce’s house Open Mic opportunity	FFGS members bring salad, beverage or dessert. Joe & Joyce provide entrée & appetizers Prepare a music piece, poem, reading, or skit for Open Mic
<i>Day 2 Thursday, Aug 20th Ballard Day</i>	10:00am: Ballard Locks – park Commodore Park 11:30 am – Picnic Free Afternoon Take Host to Dinner Night	Tour Hiram M. Chittenden Locks, gardens, & fish ladder; picnic at Commodore Park from 11:30 am. Hosts/ambassadors choose activity followed by take host to dinner
<i>Day 3 Friday, August 21st Whidbey Island Day</i>	Deception Pass bridge and Deception Pass Park Picnic Lunch Ebey’s Landing Bluff trail Coupeville Price Sculpture Forest Clinton/Mukilteo Ferry	Drive to Deception Pass, bridge & surrounding area 11:30 am picnic lunch at park Drive to Ebey Landing; walk bluff trail (or beach) Coupeville Price Sculpture Forest Drive to Clinton for Mukilteo ferry
<i>Day 4 Saturday, August 22nd Flight Museum Day</i>	10:00 am Kubota Garden Noon: Picnic outside Museum 1 pm Museum of Flight Small Group Dinners	10:00 am: Tour Kubota Garden Noon – picnic under plane outside Museum of Flight 1 pm: Tour Museum of Flight
<i>Day 5 Sunday, August 23rd Cruise Day</i>	11 am Salish Sea Cruise (1 hour) pier 57 Lunch at Ivar’s Fish Bar/ Pike Place Market with hosts	Be at Pier 57 by 10:30 am: tour Elliot Bay After lunch, walk the waterfront Enjoy all the shopping, piers, Ye Olde Curiosity Shop, etc.
<i>Day 6 Monday, August 24th Seattle Center Day</i>	9:30 am Space Needle Chihuly Glass Museum Lunch at Armory 6pm: Farewell Dinner (Dave & Judi’s)	Timed entry for Space Needle, then Chihuly Glass Museum, lunch at Armory Optional extras: tour fountain, monorail to downtown Seattle (\$2 for Seniors 1 way) Dave/Judi supply entrée, hosts bring salad, dessert, beverages, etc.
<i>Day 7: Tuesday, August 25th</i>	<i>Departure Day for some</i>	Farewell and Safe Travels!

[Seattle dog, cream cheese and all, named country's best hot dog by NYT](#)



According to the New York Times "[Wirecutter Taste Test](#)" the Seattle dog has been voted **best in the country**, just ahead of Cincinnati's dog which came in 2nd place!

We may have to do our own taste test when Cincinnati visits in August!

If any of you are hoping to do a taste of your own, I recommend starting at the "[Dog House](#)" in [Des Moines](#) which may sell you on these yummy specialty hot dogs. For those interested in creating their own Seattle dog (or any of the eight other contestants, the way to create them is described below!

*"The Seattle dog was invented in the 1980s by Pioneer Square vendor, Hadley Long. For the Wirecutter Taste Test, Wirecutter's Katie Quinn enlisted food writer Kathleen Squires and chef and activist José Andrés, the World Central Kitchen founder and acclaimed chef credited with popularizing Spanish tapas in the U.S. In the final round, the Seattle dog **topped** the Cincinnati dog and its formidable mountain of shredded cheese."*

Here are the contestants and their toppings:

- Seattle dog (cream cheese-topped with a heap of caramelized onions, deluxe version with sriracha, jalapeños and spicy brown mustard)
- Cincinnati-style Coney (yellow mustard, Skyline chili, diced onions and shredded cheddar cheese, Coney sauce on a potato roll)
- Classic New York dog (onion sauce, sauerkraut and spicy brown on a potato roll)
- Chicago dog (yellow mustard, electric-green relish, diced onions, tomatoes, pickle spears, sport peppers and celery salt on a poppy seed bun)
- Detroit-style Coney (yellow mustard, diced onions and ground-beef Coney sauce on a potato roll)
- West Virginia slaw dog (yellow mustard, diced onion, chili sauce and a lot of coleslaw on a potato roll)
- Kansas City Reuben (sauerkraut, Swiss cheese, Thousand Island dressing and caraway seeds on a potato roll)
- Sonoran Dog from Arizona (a bacon-wrapped dog with mayo and yellow mustard, beans, caramelized onions, diced tomatoes, avocados and jalapeño sauce on a bolillo roll)

FFGS goes to the Mariner's Game!

*Thank you, Dave, for organizing a Mariner's Game on June 19th! They even won!
The weather was terrific, the company was great, and some got free red, white, & blue soccer shirts!*



In January, Elaine had a bit of an unusual drive home from her exercise class – not your typical traffic stop ...

Happy 250th Birthday, America!

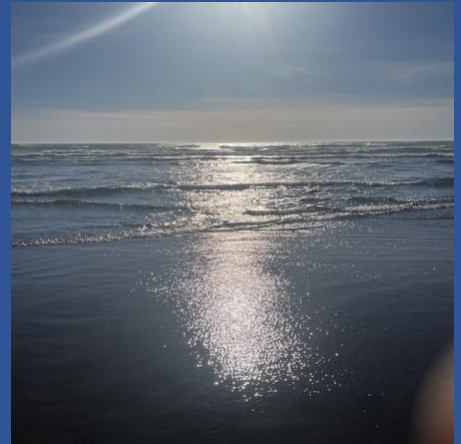
FFGS celebrated in style on Sunday, June 28th with a lovely picnic at Covenant Shores on Mercer Island. Thank you so much to Ilene and Don for hosting us and setting up everything at the venue. A big thanks to Mark and Pura for doing the shopping and organizing. And, we are really grateful to Dave for the barbecuing of the hamburgers, hot dogs, and bratwurst sausages!

It was especially nice to see Mark and Carol (who drove up from Lacey).

And, we were able to celebrate lots of birthdays! Happy Birthday to Denise (May 15th), Pura (June 15), Jim C and Doug (June 16th), Judi (June 17th), Barbara, (June 26th), Eleanor (July 8th), Sue (July 12th), and Mark S (July 23rd). Four of these are really special as Denise and Sue are celebrating 75th birthdays and Mark S and Eleanor are celebrating 85th birthdays! You all are such amazing examples of how to live life to the fullest with grace, humor, and energy!



Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves. - - Abraham Lincoln
America was built on courage, imagination, and determination. - - Harry S. Truman
We hold our heads high; despite the price we have paid. - - Maya Angelou



Elaine at Rockaway Beach (North Oregon Coast) located between Manzanita & Tillamook off Highway 101.

EXCLUSIVE: 'Spite House' in Seattle Is Back on the Market for \$800K—100 Years After Being Built as Petty Act of Marital Revenge

By Charlie Langston, May 1, 2025

*"As legend has it, the woman who built the home had previously lived with her husband in a home adjacent to the land on which the "Spite House" now sits. After she and her spouse split, she was awarded a tiny 3,090 square foot parcel of their shared property in the divorce settlement—on which she decided to build a petite home in a bid to "block his view in the front yard," according to the home's owner, **Emily Cangie**."*



Located in the Montlake neighborhood
[Click here](#) to see a video about it!

faircompanies.com

Enjoy the pictures and adventures from our Japan trip!



Here are our lovely group of 15 ambassadors from FFGS as well as Mary from Portland, Bob, Wendy, Barry, Amina from Spokane, and Mari from National Capital area.



Mary had FFI logo nails!



The original 787 Flight test airplane



Inside the cockpit of the 787!



Seattle eateries at Nagoya airport



Sidewalk snail in Kobe



Rose Garden



Barry & Amina



Boxed lunch



Coffee Jello ...



Breakfast buffet in Nagoya



Flaming lunch



Do you like your meat rare?

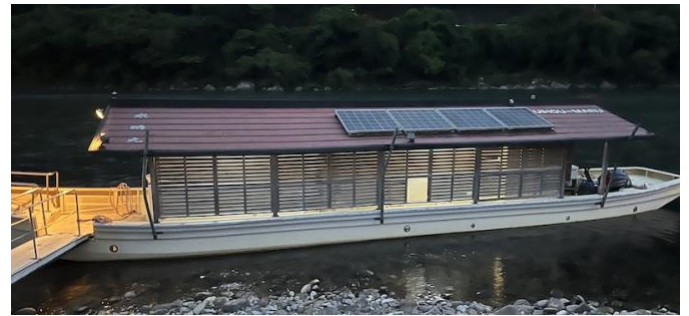
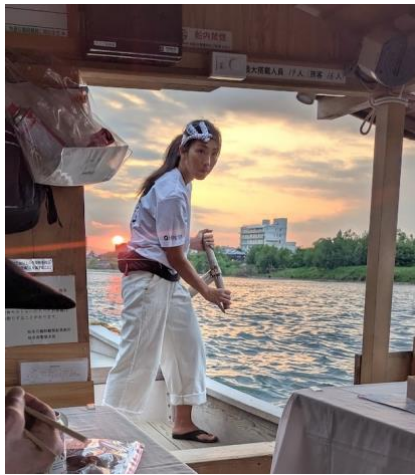


Sitting on the floor for lunch



A bit of help eating (a great activity in Nara)

Cormorant Boat Trip in Gifu



Ukai is a 1300 year old traditional Japanese fishing method where fishermen use trained cormorants to catch river fish, like sweet fish (ayu). Operating at night by the light of a hanging bonfire, fishermen control the birds on leashes, retrieving the fish the cormorants catch before they are swallowed. The boat in the bottom right is a bathroom boat for the dinner tour boats on the river for the show. Notice the ropes around the cormorants neck which the fishermen control. The ropes are tight enough so the birds cannot swallow larger fish.

What a lovely time in Gifu! Our host, Yoko (pink sweater) was a founding member of the Gifu club, 42 years ago.



Furoshiki masters teach us how to fold gift bags and purses



Modeling our Origami Samuri hats that we made.



Relaxing before the movie on Cormorant Fishing



Inuyama Castle – one of Japan's oldest castles



Thatched roof house



A Pirate towering Takayama Float



Elaine and Pura went to an exercise class



Bus with extra folding seats.



Yamakawa Soy sauce Brewery



Karen's host, Yoko



Street piano in Kobe



Nara Park Deer



Gorgeous rose garden

Off to Nara by Shinkansen (the bullet train!)



Bullet Train – whoosh!



Visiting an Onsen (hot spring)



No 'lifetime of good fortune' for Joe



Nara had many different small groups within their club: a dance team, a choir, a craft group, etc.



Dress up day with the Nara club! It took 3 – 4 women to dress us. Bob & Pura talk to a newspaper reporter



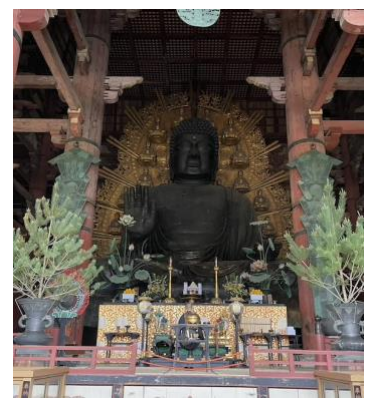
Don't the men look handsome? My host said that she had probably 10 different kimonos. What a fun experience!



Joruri-ji Temple



Sleeping on Tatami mats



Nara Buddha



One of the sacred Nara deer



Tea fields, harvesting green tea



Learning how to pick tea leaves properly

Bob, Pura, Karen, and Ilene toured Kyoto after the Nara homestay ended



Touring Kyoto



Kinkakujicho golden temple



5 level Temple – night view



Hitoe, friend for 40 years



Gondola from Shin-Kobe station



View from the top of Mount Rokko



Nunobiki Waterfalls

Did You Know - - - Cincinnati

- Was first settled in 1788 and incorporated as a city in 1802. It's Ohio's third largest city after Columbus and Cleveland with an estimated metropolitan area population of 2,265,051.
- The city is named for the Society of the Cincinnati, an organization of Revolutionary War officers. The club's name derives from Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, a dictator of the early Roman Republic who saved Rome from a crisis and then retired to farming because he didn't want to remain in power, becoming a symbol of Roman civic virtue.
- 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.
- 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, Kentucky.



Here are some wise words of wisdom for all of us to embrace

1. *Mistakes don't make you a failure. They make you a learner.*
2. *Achievements are not a symbol of your worth. They're a snapshot of your performance.*
3. *Beating yourself up doesn't make you stronger; it leaves you bruised. Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to a good friend.*
4. *It's impossible to please everyone. Decide whose opinion matters to you – and whose doesn't.*
5. *Character is not revealed by how many setbacks you face. It's forged by how you face them.*
6. *People gauge your competence mostly by your hits, not your misses.*
7. *The objective is not to be the best; it's to get better. The person you're competing with is your past self, and the bar you're setting is for your future self.*
8. *Our biggest regrets aren't actions – they're inactions. Don't set yourself up to wish you'd taken more chances.*
9. *Healthy goals include two targets: an aspirational result and an acceptable outcome. If you fall anywhere between them, you haven't failed.*
10. *Success is not a straight line. It's a squiggly one.*

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

FOR GIFU'S WELCOME/FAREWELL

Ohayou, buen día, greetings .

I stand in gratitude, together with Bob, working for our group of ambassadors, for the experiences you have gifted us.

You have shared your home, your family, your culture, your country. We had lots of fun; you made us feel at home.

So many things that are different, and similar, have served to enrich us, and made us aware that with curiosity, kindness, and love we connect to the essential of ourselves, to our humanity.

Arigatou gozaimasu shita.

Our ambassadors want to give the Gifu club money for your club to donate to the charity of your choice.

And last, but not least, our Friendship Force of Greater Seattle would like to formally invite you to visit us.

In gratitude and friendship.

Pura

[Rick Steves: Are Americans Welcome in Europe?](#) (Click on link for more)

"I just flew from Greece to Germany, where I'm about to begin the second leg of my 50-day trip to Europe. Before I left home, nervous travelers were asking me how I thought Europeans would respond to American tourists right. It's no secret that our country has been taking an aggressive, America-first approach to foreign policy — and our European friends have often been caught in the middle (ask the Danes about Greenland). As all this goes on, travelers are understandably wondering — are Americans still welcome in Europe? Well, I've just spent a month in Italy and island-hopping in Greece, and the answer is a big fat YES. And the Americans I've met over here are loving it.

In fact, from a European perspective, American travelers are more interesting than ever. Everywhere I've gone, I've been met with warm welcomes, big smiles, and genuine curiosity. Sure, people are confused about what the heck's going on right now, but most of Europe has, at some point, faced similar situations with their own governments. None of the locals, guides, hoteliers, restaurant staff, or taxi drivers I've spoken with have given an ounce of judgment. Instead, they want to talk about today's crazy headlines — because they're interested in connecting, learning, and sharing experiences with a visitor from the other side of the globe. I was just on Paros, a Greek island of 15,000 residents — plus all the tourists that come to enjoy the beaches and souvlaki — that could be totally powered by a dozen modern wind turbines. Excited about their green marvel, locals are confused why anyone would be hell-bent on stopping that industry. We talk.

With the war in Iran making the cost of gas in Greece about \$8 a gallon — roughly double what Americans are paying — people here are rationing basic energy needs, and frequently asking questions like, "Do I need to drive today?" We talk.

Restaurateurs and local guides remark on how the country's beaches are busy as usual with Germans, Brits, and Aussies...but this year, Americans are scarce — and missed. We talk."

Connecting with locals and understanding different worldviews is one reason why I travel. As Americans, the best thing we can do right now is to get out there, understand our place in our ever-smaller world, and listen to what others have to say — so we can be good ambassadors for our country, and do our part to be great global citizens."

Doesn't this last paragraph sound like a mission statement for Friendship Force?