



friendship force
NORTHERN COLORADO



Cathie McCallum
Editor and Publisher

March
April
2025

Estes Park, Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland, Windsor and Surrounding Areas

FROM OUR PRESIDENT SUZI GOSSARD

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Next Meeting
March 14
Elderhaus
6813 S. College Ave
6:00 PM

Hello Friendship Force of Northern Colorado!

Our new meeting space at the ElderHaus is very comfortable and well-appointed. Thanks to all who help set up, clean up, and work to make our meetings run smoothly, especially **Elizabeth McCoy** (Hospitality) and **Pam Morrison** (her assistant), **Rosemary Donovan** (snack coordinator), **Cathie McCallum** (greeter and program coordinator), **Nancy Benson** (Ways & Means raffle), and **Debby Jones** (FFNC store).



A big thank you to **Cinda Clark** who has graciously volunteered to be our Board Secretary! We also appreciate **Larry Clark's** quick completion of auditing our accounts for the last two years and **Carol McGrath's** follow-up on his recommendations. I am grateful to **Ken Weaver** who sets up our monthly Board meetings via Zoom, administers our *my.FF* website, sees that **Rick Lohmeyer** gets newsletters and bulletins from the regional clubs to put on our FFNC website (thanks **Rick!**), and serves as a member of the FFI Board.

Our upcoming year looks to be busy for our club. **Rocky Padden** continues to coordinate our monthly CLEO outings (see the listing in this newsletter). We also have a number of Journeys – *one outgoing* to FF Seacoast NH with an optional Canadian Maritimes tour – Coordinator **Carol McGrath**, and *two incoming*: FF Phoenix in June – Coordinator **LaDonna Palm**, and FF Baton Rouge in August – Coordinator **Elizabeth McCoy**). Watch for details about these journeys! The outgoing to Austin and Dallas had to be postponed.

We always welcome your contribution to our club! If you would like to get more involved there are various committees and responsibilities that could use your expertise! One suggestion is meeting greeter: just come a little early and have a welcoming smile!

Our March meeting starts at 6:00 PM and focuses on World Friendship Day with a potluck of international foods, a “fashion show” of clothes you brought home from your travels, and a program featuring international high school students. **Debby Jones** and **Rocky Padden** share the details in this newsletter. See you there!

In friendship, **Suzi Gossard**



JANUARY MEETING: Getting Acquainted



Volunteer of the Year 2024 Jan Rozman

Jan has really stepped up to help us out this past year, volunteering to help with or take charge of a variety of Friendship Force activities. When we needed someone to help get the picnic arranged for our FFAustin inbound ambassadors, she was there. She arranged the visit to the Morning Star Dairy and the Howling Cow Cafe for our ambassadors. When we needed someone to pull together our annual picnic with Cheyenne, she was there. She wouldn't give up...she also chaired the Holiday Party committee in December and was instrumental in setup and cleanup. There are other behind the scene things she has helped with. I wanted to let her know how much we appreciated her willingness to be there for us.

Susan Mathre, FFNC President 2024

The January 10, 2025 meeting was our first at our new location: Elderhaus Adult Day Care facility at 6813 S. College Ave., Fort Collins. We had an opportunity to get acquainted with the building, the 2025 officers, and with each other. At our tables we shared personal background based on family, career, and interests.

MARCH MEETING: World Friendship Day

Fellow members, you are invited to celebrate the day on March 14, 2025, starting at 6:00PM at our meeting location at the Elderhaus, 6813 S College Ave. Join in the fun by wearing your favorite ethnic and folk attire. Bring items you have gathered during your visits to share with members. Cook up a favorite cultural dish for our pot luck dinner. Then enjoy our program provided by our guests, three exceptional foreign exchange students. Come be part of the fun celebrating the diverse cultures we have experienced!

APRIL MEETING: Japanese Art

Kat Yoshie Bertram, Volunteer and Collection Manager at the Global Village Museum and ceramics instructor at the Bicentennial Art Center with the city of Aurora, will be our featured speaker at the April 11 meeting. Kat's Japanese-American heritage influenced her decisions to pursue a BA (Magna Cum Laude) in Art History and Studio Art (Ceramics) from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and an MA in Japanese Art with a minor in Black Diasporic Art at CU Boulder.

Her topic: **Mass Appeal: The Transformation of Japanese Art for the Public** explores the evolution of Japanese art from large-scale installations in temples and shrines, to woodblock prints depicting everyday life, to modern mass-produced media like anime and manga.





CLEO=Colorado Let's Eat Out

February 20th we went to Teds Stillwater Grill in Windsor.



Rocky welcomes your suggestions for CLEO restaurants! As coordinator she will make the reservations and receive the RSVPs from members.

March 20th we will be going over to Greeley to have lunch at 11:30 at the **Rio Grande Restaurant**, 825 9th St. Unit A. Afterward we will spend some time at the **Model Railroad Museum**. This should take an hour to an hour and a half. 680 10th St. The cost for Seniors is \$12. Please RSVP to Rocky 970 308 5478.

April 17 we will have a game afternoon at Rocky's house. We'll be ordering pizza for our 11:30 lunch. Price to be determined based on RSVP's. Please RSVP to Rocky 970 308 5478.

May 15th we'll be going back to **Windsor** to dine at **Chili Thai**, 1215 Main St. Unit D. Please RSVP to Rocky 970 308 5478.

Have you paid your 2025 dues?

Dues for 2025 (including \$30 for FFI and \$20 for local club) are **\$50 per person**.

Make checks payable to FFNC and mail to current treasurer:

Carol McGrath, 1141 Miramont Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80524

Or send by **Zelle** to ffnocotreasurer@gmail.com.



FEBRUARY MEETING: Saudi Arabia Then and Now

At our February meeting, we were treated to two different views of Saudi Arabia, one from Elizabeth Stanley who lived and worked there from 1999 until 2001, and one from Cathie McCallum who visited her former FRCC students there in 2023. Elizabeth spoke first. She had an administrative position at Dar Al Hekma Private College, a new college for Arabic women. It was established by a group of Saudi families who wanted a better education for their daughters. The ex-pat faculty and staff were asked to agree to five things:

- No practice of religion other than Islam

- No pork

- No alcohol

- Women must wear an abaya and hijab (mostly black) in public and in the presence of men

- Women could not drive

The school was a beautiful building with a lot of marble. There was a separate wing for the male Board of Directors. Entry to the building was through two gates. The first was guarded by a man; the second by a woman. Once through the second gate, abayas and hijabs could be removed, but if a man entered the area, "Man in the building" was announced and proper attire was donned again.

Outside of work, she was able to scuba dive in the Red Sea and camp on its beaches. The beaches were usually deserted. She visited and camped at the archeological site of Madain Saleh. They had the run of the place then; now it is a World Heritage Site and a tourist attraction. Technically requiring a license, she hired a driver and went on photography excursions. Among the more unusual things she photographed were camel beauty contests and camel races.

When Cathie visited the same city of Jeddah twenty-two years later, she found a different world. Although Arabic women still wore abayas, they had become much more colorful, and visiting tourists were not required to wear them. Women were allowed to drive or could use an Uber, and English was the official second language. Tourism was encouraged, and she found familiar businesses such as McDonalds and KFC. There was a great deal of construction going on, and when she visited the capital city of Riyadh, she was intrigued by the unique shapes of the skyscrapers. The city offered a lot of high-end shopping and even an Epcot-like theme park, Boulevard World.

Cathie shared photos of her students and their families in their homes and on many activities. Her special tour guide at the House of Islamic Art gave her an autographed book he had written. She saw and photographed the world's tallest water fountain, the Prophet's Mosque, and traveled to Medina on the high-speed train. She came home with many gifts. She said you didn't dare say that you liked something because they would give it to you.

Elizabeth had said that her college's goal was to teach the girls how to develop critical thinking. It would be interesting to know what those college students are doing now.

Reporter: LaDonna Palm



Saudi Arabia then and now...



Elizabeth is third from the right.

Expatriate faculty and staff in their black abayas and hijabs



Today women can choose colorful abayas and hijabs





FFI: Moving Forward, Branching Out

As Secretary this year on your Friendship Force International Board of Directors, the words *hopeful* and *determined* come to mind to describe the Board's February three-day in-person meeting. In the spirit of Wayne Smith and the Carters, the Board is unanimous that our vision continues to be: *a worldwide movement of inspired people building bridges for a more friendly world.* What are the pillars of how, with our mission *to promote world peace and understanding across the barriers that separate people*, we fulfill this vision?

The Board agreed on three pillars:

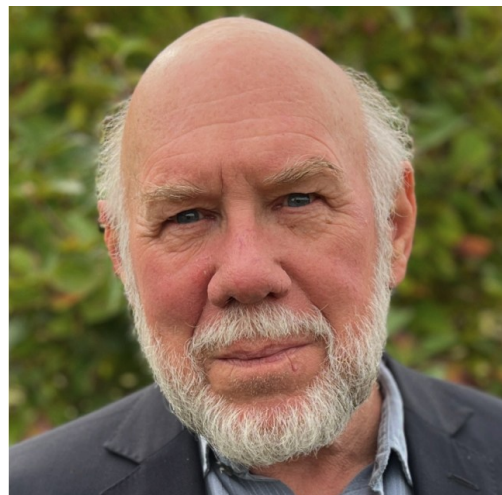
- Strengthening intercultural connection and friendship (Journeys/Events)
- Education and training on becoming better global citizens (Education)
- Engaging community and organizational partnerships and projects (Community)

To grow in these new times, Friendship Force International needs to renew itself as a movement. Branch out. Teach what it means to be a global citizen. Partner locally, as we do with the Global Village Museum of Arts and Cultures, and partner with national and international organizations such as Sister Cities and the Welcoming Cities movement (<https://welcomingamerica.org/>).

Caid Law, an FFI intern who is a University of Colorado student of FFI Board member Dr. Michael English, Director of CU's Peace, Conflict, and Security Institute, presented *Be a Better Global Citizen* at FFI's North American Conference (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oStoAz7T1B89OP4ACM42or6D9p5Flf8e/view>). [copy and paste links to reach these sites.]

These times need the positivity and civility of Friendship Force. These times need FFI's message of neighborliness between like-minded strangers toward a more friendly world. Let's talk more in our club about intercultural ways to branch out, hold events, take on projects, to make movement.

Ken Weaver, FFI Board Secretary





JOURNEYS 2025

INBOUND

Phoenix, AZ: June 23-29
Baton Rouge, LA: August 19-26

OUTBOUND

New Hampshire Seacoast
September 17-23

*Specific dates and details to be shared
as plans develop.*

Check the FFI website for opportunities to travel with other clubs when they have space available.

WHAT DOES FF MEAN TO US?

What does the Friendship Force experience mean to us? Is it getting to know our host people as individuals? Is it seeing the area, people and sites through the eyes of our hosts? Is it learning more about the culture firsthand? Is it an opportunity to get answers to our variety of questions about culture, country, history and people?

THE ANSWER IS **YES!**

2025 OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PRESIDENT: Suzi Gossard
VICE PRES: Susanna Garner
SECRETARY/HISTORIAN: Cinda Clark
TREASURER: Carol McGrath

Journey Directors: Marilyn Garner
Meeting Greeter: Cathie McCallum *YOUR TURN*
Meeting Hospitality: Elizabeth McCoy
Meeting Music: Rosemary Donovan
Membership: Cathie McCallum +committee
Membership booklet: **EDITOR NEEDED**
Reporters Coordinator: Suzi Gossard
Newsletter Editors/Publishers:

Sue Cummins
Marilyn Garner
Cathie McCallum

Programs: Cathie McCallum *ideas welcome*
Social Activities: Rocky Padden
Store Manager: Debby Jones
Ways and Means: Nancy Benson
Website: Rick Lohmeyer

*If you are willing to help with any position,
please contact Suzi Gossard, president, or
the chair of the committee that interests you.*

*Committee chairs, invite someone to work
with you! It feels good to be needed and
wanted,—an active member.*

Refer to our club website, ffncolo.com, for back issues of newsletters and information on programs, journeys, leadership contacts, upcoming events and for opportunities to apply for other regional club journeys. Thanks to Rick Lohmeyer for an outstanding website that can provide up-to-the-minute information between newsletters. Refer to www.friendshipforce.org for broad information about Friendship Force and my.friendshipforce.org for information specific to members and secure for sharing personal information needed for journey registration