



Editor  
Cathie McCallum

May  
2026

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

## CALENDAR

May meeting, **May 8**, 7pm at Elderhaus

May CLEO will be in Greeley **May 28**. See page 3 for details.

**ANNOUNCEMENT;** June 12 meeting will be election of officers. If you are interested in serving as an officer, please contact Susanna.

## MAY PROGRAM

Our May focus will be an opportunity to discuss the FFI initiatives and discuss some of the obstacles we have as an organization, both in our own club and around the world.

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## THE WORLD



What country has the world's longest sandy beach?  
[The answer was shared at the April 28th International Night at the Library held at Old Town Library.] What will you learn at the May 26<sup>th</sup> session to be held at the Global Village Museum? Come see!

# PRESIDENT'S NOTES

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I am currently traveling home from the North American Conference in Memphis, where many Friendship Force members and staff gathered to share information and learn about the new developments and initiatives for 2026 and beyond. Attendees included members who had been with Friendship Force since the beginning as well as those who had just joined a few months ago. This mix of long-standing commitment and brand-new excitement was fascinating, as I am sure you can imagine. The opportunities for individual members and as an organization are abundant, and I have hope that Friendship Force can be successful in the future.



Our monthly meeting on May 8th will be an opportunity to discuss the FFI initiatives and discuss some of the obstacles we have as an organization, both in our own club and around the world, so I hope you can attend and share ideas.

We have a new FriendshipForce.org website as of a few days ago, and I am excited about the advances in technology that we can look forward to in the future. I hope to use the new tools as a club to encourage growth and make it easier to share Friendship Force with others.

Until then, here are a few recommendations for community engagement & support:

May 2nd: Gift shopping for Journeys @ the Ranch  
<https://www.molliemcgees.com/event-details/spring-craft-market-2026>

May 5th – Cinco de Mayo <https://mujeresdecolores.org/cinco-de-mayo-fundraiser-celebration-celebrating-cultural-heritage>  
<https://www.greeleydowntown.com/events/cinco-de-mayo>

May 7th – @ Global Village Museum [Travel with Intention](#) from Travel Writer Zanny Merullo - Global Village Museum Register at [globalvillagemuseum.org](http://globalvillagemuseum.org)

May 30th – [Global Sounds Live](#) @ Old Town Square, Fort Collins

\*Don't forget to bring a snack to share and any travel-related games, gifts or fun items to donate to our raffle to the May meeting.

See you there!  
Susanna Garner

### Successful North American Conference

Susanna and I joined our Regional Field Representative Nancy Wood and a half dozen other Rocky Mountain States club members at the North American Conference April 24-27 in Memphis, Tennessee. It was great! A combination of useful workshops and local flavor.

FFI CEO Jeremi Snook and FFI Board of Directors Chair Andy Kelly set an optimistic tone even in these difficult times. As a metaphor for sailing on into FFI’s future, Jeremi showed slides of (1) stormy seas, (2) charting the course, and (3) the flotilla of clubs each flying a flag.



The excellent presentations and workshop slides will be available online.

Each FFI club worldwide is being asked to plan ways to celebrate FFI’s March 2027 fiftieth anniversary. Each U.S. club is also being asked to personally be in touch with friends around the world and encourage them to visit.

Each of us is being encouraged to seek like-minded intercultural partners to include in our local club activities. I’d say much in the way Cathie keeps us informed about the Global Village Museum of Arts and Cultures and the Northern Colorado Returned Peace Corps Volunteers group. Let’s begin to build a long list.

At the May 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting we’ll report highlights of what we learned. Susanna and I look forward to your questions.

Elvis was in the building. Attendees learned about and visited the National Civil Rights Museum. And I now know the difference between “wet” and “dry” Memphis barbecued pork ribs.



# APRIL MEETING

Sara Tarr reported to us about her trip to Japan to visit her stepmother and showed us pictures of her stepmother wearing her beautiful Ainu costume. The Ainu are an indigenous ethnic group native to northern Japan originating from Russian lands. They have a distinct culture, language and history that sets them apart from the majority Yamato Japanese population. They traditionally lived in Hokkaido. Historically they had lighter skin and unique facial features.

They believe spirits called Kamuy exist in animals, plants and natural forces. The bear was especially sacred and celebrated in rituals and were part of families.

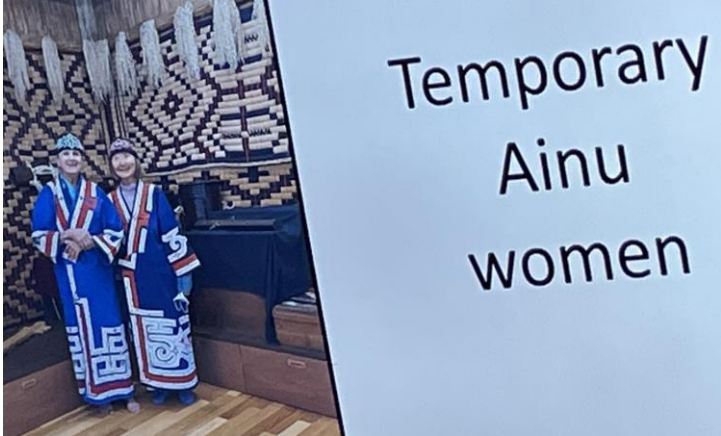
In the 1800s Ainu land was taken and language and customs were banned. Children were taken from families and if they died, parents were not notified.

In 2019 a law legally recognized the Ainu as indigenous people and promoted culture, education and anti-discrimination. It focused on cultural support, not full indigenous rights for land ownership or the power to decide political or territorial matters.

Reporter: Pam Morrison



Sara and her stepmother





Hokkaido  
Prefecture



Marapto



1910

2025

Japanese



Salmon skin  
shoes!

Crafts

## MAY CLEO

The May CLEO will be **Thursday, May 28, in Greeley, with lunch at 11:30 AM at Lafayette's Creperie at the Currier Inn**, 1221 9th Avenue, Greeley 80631.

At 2 PM we'll drive to the Hope Springs project, developed by Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity. It's a 42-acre, 491-unit affordable housing community designed to provide about 175 net-zero-ready Habitat homes alongside apartments. It focuses on serving families earning 30-80% of the area median income (AMI) with amenities like childcare and parks and is one of the largest Habitat for Humanity developments in the Western US.

Contact Ken so he knows how many people plan to participate and so carpooling can be arranged.

## Monthly Meeting Raffle



The board has decided to continue to hold the raffle at our monthly meetings this year. This means we need donations of interesting prizes! Puzzles, travel books, travel accessories, and seasonal decorations are all examples of things we've seen in the past. This is a good way to declutter and help our club! We will store future prizes in our cupboard at Elderhaus, so please make sure they are relatively small.

**FRIENDSHIP FORCE HAS A NEW LOGO**



**Friendship Force**  
INTERNATIONAL

Friendship Force is defined by the words we use, the actions we take, and the commitments we all make every day to advocate for peace through friendship. The brand standards and marketing materials are simply tools to help us more clearly and consistently share that mission with the world." --Jeremy Snook

# JOURNEYS

- The journey to **Indonesia**, August 5th through the 20th, is well into the planning stages. There are three moving parts that include: a 5-night journey to the island of **Borneo**, a 5-night journey to the island of **Java**, and a 4-day Javanese Culture Festival, on the same island, in **Yogyakarta**. Applications will be sent to those interested in this culturally packed journey. We currently have 7 signed up: 5 ambassadors from our FFI club and 2 from Japan are joining us. We would love to have 12 ambassadors on this lovely journey. Please spread the word!

Please contact Carol McGrath if you are interested and have not already done so.

WE WILL BE WELCOMING **New Hampshire Seacoast** October 7-14<sup>th</sup>

There are still opportunities to participate in a variety of ways. We can still use more volunteers for hosting and day hosting. Please contact Marilyn Garner if you are willing to help.

## REGIONAL RENDEZVOUS

October 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 2026 in Estes Park, Colorado  
YMCA of the Rockies

**Share Ideas, Experiences & Stories**

Morning sessions to include Member Recruitment, Club Development, Accessing FFI Resources & Creating Community Partnerships

Afternoons free – to visit Estes Park & Rocky Mountain National Park, or to join group activities

Monday evening Welcome Buffet & Wednesday Farewell Dinner with Program

Total cost for lodge room, breakfasts & shared dinners under \$425

**Deposit of \$50 Due March 31<sup>st</sup> --Call Susanna if you missed this date**

GREATER DENVER    NORTHERN COLORADO    PIKES PEAK    UTAH  
CHEYENNE    NEW MEXICO    WESTERN COLORADO

**PRESIDENT: Susanna Garner**

**VICE PRESIDENT: Rocky Padden**

**SECRETARY/HISTORIAN: Sue Cummins**

**TREASURER: Carol McGrath**