

## ***Friendship Force***



***Memphis, TN***

*October 1, 2022*

*Changing the Way You See the World*

<https://ffmem.com>



### ***President's Greeting by Margaret Dixon***

Dear Friends,

Friendship Force Memphis has been busy with general meetings, board meetings, an Open World event and several local outings! I hope each of you was able to participate at some level. It's been exciting to begin again, renew acquaintances, and venture into a "reimagined" Friendship Force program.

We are rejoicing in having attracted some new members, but we are still a small club and need the participation of all members! YOUR presence and

involvement makes a difference and encourages others to share of their time, talent and resources.

Our Open World program for the Ukrainian surgeons generated a lot of interest in our organization, not to mention a generous amount of publicity, for which we are most grateful! I'd like to extend a special thanks to those who hosted, John and Sharon McCall, Charlotte Hayes and Cindy Law. And who can forget our welcome and farewell parties in the homes of Mary Bullard and Jim and Sharon Bailey! So many unforgettable moments!!!

We'll continue with an event each month and hopefully resume a regular schedule for 2023. Within the next year, FFI will be emailing member info and news only to folks who have signed up for <https://my.friendshipforce.org>. In addition to receiving those emails, people who sign up have access to info about journeys, virtual experiences, conferences, events, clubs, interest groups and a help center.

In Friendship,  
Margaret



### ***Travel Highlight***

For us, travel is about more than taking a vacation—it's about learning, understanding, and discovering our shared humanity. Our journeys are inspired by the relationships we build, both with our travel companions and with those we meet along the way. Likewise, our hosting experiences are designed for our hosts to both share their experiences and better understand their visitors.

We thrive on forging new connections and sharing experiences that lead to transformative growth. So whether you're joining us on our next journey or warmly

opening your doors to others, join us and see how the Friendship Force International experience shapes you.

### **Friendship Force Journey Update by Rick Thomas**

Friendship Force International (FFI) has tried to return to pre-COVID times by offering a number of journeys to its member clubs. The following sections provide an update to the activities of the Memphis club.

**Ukrainian Open World Journey:** Friendship Force of Memphis hosted a delegation of surgeons from Ukraine July 22-30. Because of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February, the numerous Open World delegations from Ukraine were canceled. However, at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour it was determined that there was a need for Ukrainian medical practitioners to obtain information and make contacts with experts in such as burn treatment, trauma care and intensive care. Memphis was selected to host one of the two delegations, and we were able to arrange for an excellent experience for the four visiting physicians. (Five were scheduled but one could not leave the battlefield.) The week-long program provided great opportunities for the visitors, and the local medical community welcomed them with open arms. Importantly, our club received an incredible amount of publicity as a result, with write-ups in the daily and weekly newspapers, TV spots on all of the local channels, and a live TV interview with our journey coordinator and our president. The only negative aspect was the challenge of covering the expenses for the group with the funds that FFI provided. Fortunately, we had a journey “nest egg” that allowed us to make up the difference.



**Inbound Journey from England:** An inbound exchange with a club from St. Mary's in England was originally scheduled for September. We had eagerly accepted the opportunity to host them but, unfortunately, they had to cancel due to lack of participation. The shadow of the pandemic is still dampening many people's willingness to travel.

**Outbound Journey to Chiapas, Mexico:** For several months we had been planning a journey to the state of Chiapas in Mexico in November. This journey was originally planned for May of 2020 but had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Although there was initially significant interest in the trip, so many potential ambassadors dropped out that the journey had to be cancelled. This is unfortunate in light of the work that was already done on both ends. It also casts us in an unfavorable light with FFI. Our board needs to carefully consider our ability to support international journeys in the future.

**Inbound Journey from Lethbridge, Canada:** We have accepted an inbound journey from the Lethbridge club in Alberta in Canada. We can expect 12 or more ambassadors to arrive in Memphis in late April or early May. We will need six or more home hosts for the week-long home stay, as well as day hosts and transportation support. After the first of the year, we need to form a planning committee to work out the arrangements.

Friendship Force of Memphis is committed to providing travel opportunities and other activities for its members. We traveled to Crystal Bridges in northwest Arkansas last year and just returned from an overnight trip to west Tennessee. We hope to offer other short trips on a regular basis. Anyone who has an idea for a trip to visit local attractions is encouraged to put together a proposal.



**Cindy Law** joined FF after attending the Van Gogh exhibit. She was born in New Orleans, grew up on Long Island but after 46 years in Memphis considers it home. Cindy's early career was as a real estate broker, then she taught math/algebra for 18 years in the Memphis Shelby County Schools System. Later, as a master gardener and horticulturist,

she established [CindyLawGardens.com](http://CindyLawGardens.com) She's raised four children, is a Grizzlies' season ticket holder, is a choir member and enjoys hosting in her home and hopes to do more traveling.

**Linda Woodbury** was born in Iowa, grew up primarily in Houston and spent some years moving up and down the Mississippi River. She also lived in Nebraska. She retired from the Memphis Public Library after 22 years of service as a children's librarian. Linda's interests include reading, especially mysteries, and anthropology. She loves to explore the relationship between cultures, languages and histories of the world. Linda also studies Spanish.

**Michelle Mullen** decided to join Memphis FF after attending an Open World event. Having recently retired from radiological technology at the VA hospital, she has time for reading, gardening, art classes, plus theater and art shows. She has a journalism/film background and was privileged to be a student of Ken Burns. An upcoming Brooks Museum "Maurice Sendak" exhibit will feature her recent paper maché creations.

**Joe Ventimiglia**, originally a Hoosier from Indiana, is a retired sociology professor and relationship counselor. He has one son and twin granddaughters. Joe's interests include fishing, acting, football, sampling different cuisines, and attending UU church services. He is currently a student of Spanish.

## FALL OUTING

On the lovely fall day of September 9, 2022, 10 members of Memphis FF attended Dyersburg State Community College for the "Naming of A Building" ceremony and reception in honor of one of our new members, Dr. Karen Bowyer. That afternoon we journeyed to Henning for a tour of the Alex Haley museum. By late afternoon we had arrived at Reelfoot Lake in time for a respite before dinner at the



enchanting Blue Bank Resort.

The following day we headed to Union City and spent several hours exploring the Discovery Museum. Then we were off for a wine tasting at the White Squirrel Winery where we were able to pick grapes but unfortunately found no white squirrels! Our final destination before returning to Memphis was dinner at the Blacksmith Restaurant in Dyersburg. It was a “bit” of a whirlwind trip but we enjoyed each other, ate SO well, laughed a lot, and certainly gained a greater appreciation of this part of our state.



### **The Naming Ceremony by Annette Bickers**

What a pleasure to attend “The Naming Ceremony” of Dyersburg State Community College's Mathematics Building honoring Dr. Karen Bowyer! We arrived before 10:00 a.m. for an outdoor ceremony held on a pristine lawn with rows of chairs facing a podium surrounded by sunflowers, ferns, and seven speaker chairs. New college president, Dr. Scott Cook, presided introducing the speakers and reading a tribute letter from former Senator Lamar Alexander.

Attendees of the event included the 106 year old wife of the first president of DSCC with her son, Karen's niece, and Karen’s former roommate with her admiral husband as well as approximately 50 others from the college and community. As Karen spoke, she praised her teachers who inspired her at a young age to love mathematics. After obtaining a college degree, Karen taught mathematics in Cali, Colombia, then returning to the USA for her masters and Ph.D. At DSCC, she enlarged the campus to include Covington and Trenton and formalized

fundraising for the Annual Fund and DSCC Foundation. After becoming President Emeritus, she has been continuing to fund raise for the college.



Following the outdoor ceremony, we were invited inside to observe the unveiling of Karen's portrait, followed by a delicious lunch. Our hearts were filled with gratitude for Karen and her ongoing belief in education for each person in our world.

**Next Friendship Force International Conference  
Dubrovnik, Croatia - October 2-5, 2023  
More information to come.**

### **Let's Get Together Soon!**

Several upcoming events and meetings are in the planning stages. As a club, we need access to inexpensive venues for those activities. It would be important for the venue to have a kitchen and space for approximately 30 members and guests. If you know of a church, party space, or home that would accommodate us, please let our club president, Margaret Dixon, know.