

## Friendship Force



Memphis, TN

December 1, 2023

Changing the Way You See the World

<https://ffmem.com>



***Christmas Party***

***Saturday, December 9***

***4:00 - 6:00 p.m.***

***Fratelli's at the Botanic Gardens***

***Menu: caprese salad skewers, wild mushroom chicken,***

***seared salmon and loaded baked potato bar***

***Members no charge, guests \$30***

***(RSVP to Sharon McCall by Dec. 4)***

***Please invite prospective new members!***

Note: It's time to renew your Friendship Force membership. Woody will be ready to collect the \$45 dues at the Christmas Party.



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

Holiday greetings to all Memphis Friendship Force members! As the outgoing president I am compelled to express my appreciation to the organization for the myriad opportunities it has provided me! It's been a great experience here and with other clubs. I will continue to support the new president, Kathy Gardner, and look forward to all she will inspire and bring to the future of our viable organization! Memories of the past years I have shared with all of you fill my heart with love and joy!

### **Friendship Force Journey Update by Rick Thomas 2023-2024**

Friendship Force activities finally resumed during 2023 and there are several events to report. In February-March a contingent from the Memphis club spent two weeks in



Florida. Split “platoons” visited Sarasota for one week and The Villages for the second. The four members who visited Sarasota included Margaret Dixon, Karen Bowyer, Sandy Martin and Rick Thomas. Our guests were very gracious, and we enjoyed a great visit. A highlight was a visit to the Barnum and Bailey Circus Museum. Karen, Sandy and

Margaret continued to The Villages and were joined by the Pierces, Kathy Gardner, and new member Pam Carr. They enjoyed the stay at this retirement community and visited a number of sites in the area. Rick Thomas was journey coordinator for the Sarasota week and Margaret Dixon coordinated The Village week.



In April a group of 13 FF members and friends participated in an “unofficial” journey to northwest Arkansas. The junket was organized by Rick Thomas and Margaret Dixon, who were joined by Carolyn Pierce, Sandy Martin, Sharon Roerhig, Joe Ventimiglia, Pam Carr, Emily Vergho, and David and Lotty Richard, along with “friends” Dora Berry, Fatima Noriega and Emily’s friend, Debra Graham. The journey involved a two-



night stay in Bentonville (after a stop in Fayetteville on the way). The main attraction was the Crystal Bridges Museum (with the added benefit of their Forest Lights program). Other area museums and art galleries were visited, and several tasty meals were enjoyed. The return trip included stop-overs at scenic locations in central Arkansas. Hopefully, more short excursions like this can be planned for 2024.

## Lethbridge Canada Contingent Enjoys Memphis



In May of this year, we hosted a contingent from Lethbridge, Canada. They were with us for a full week of activities and received an in-depth exposure to life in Memphis. Rick Thomas coordinated the journey, and home hosts included Woody and Carolyn Pierce, Karen Bowyer, Kathy Gardner, Mary Bullard, Charlotte Hayes and Cindy Law. Thanks to Margaret Dixon for her help and to the other members who served as day hosts and transporters (particularly since we were short-handed that week). Many new friends were made, and some members maintained contact and even visited Lethbridge.

## Upcoming Journeys

Two journeys are planned (so far) for 2024. In the Memphis club will make a journey to Fort Worth, Texas. Scheduled for May 7-13, the program will include visits to several sites of interest in and around Fort Worth. An extension is expected to be offered for additional touring of Austin, Dallas or some other nearby location. Rick Thomas is planning the journey and will be assisted by Karen Bowyer. Members are encouraged to sign up for this journey at the December Christmas party, since we need to assure FFI that we can fill out the roster.

In the fall the Memphis club will be hosting (another) contingent from Canada. The Calgary club will be here September 29-October 5. We are limiting them to 12 ambassadors, and it is not too early to be thinking about hosting a Canuck or two. Rick Thomas will be coordinating this inbound journey with assistance from Karen Bowyer.

### 2024 Officers

President: Kathy Gardner

Sunshine: Shirley Kincaid

Vice President: Sandra Martin

Website: Ray Rider

Secretary: Cindy Law

Newsletter: Sharon McCall.

Treasurer: Woody Pierce

Programs: Mike Farien

Journeys: Rick Thomas, assisted by Karen Bowyer

Note: If you would be interested in being the gift bag chairman, please let Kathy Gardner know. Annette Bickers is willing to advise the new chairman.

### A Message From our VP, Kathryn Gardner

I hope all of you will be able to attend the Memphis Friendship Force Christmas Party at the Botanic Gardens, December 9. On that evening we will enjoy a lovely dinner, fine fellowship, short program and introduction of our new officers. I'm looking forward to a year of friendships and journeys to new horizons and welcoming at least 15 new members. Can we do that? I hope so. In October I was fortunate to attend the International Friendship Force Conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia for five days at the Riviera Sheraton. There

were attendees from more than 38 countries. What a marvelous collection of internationals who love people and want to create a world of friendship--not war. Thank you, Jimmy Carter, for starting this amazing club in the 70's. I extended my visit to this incredible area of Eastern Europe by visiting Kotor, Montenegro, Medjugorje and Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia and many cities in Croatia. This was an amazing journey of the history, culture and life of these fascinating countries. You will be hearing more about the conference and countries at one of our general meetings next year. We are already planning journeys, programs and parties for next year and we want you to hop on the Friendship train with us and take an active role in '24. In the meantime, have a blessed Thanksgiving and join us for our joyous Christmas party.

## Rosalynn Carter Tribute: Friendship Force International



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 (November 19, 2023). Mrs. Carter, shown in the photograph below 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.

