

Friendship Force
Changing the Way You See the World
<https://www.ffmem.com>



Memphis, TN
June 1, 2026



Potluck Supper and General Meeting
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
(On the west side of the building in the former Catholic Elementary)
1695 Central Avenue
Thursday, June 4, 2026
6:00 p.m.
RSVP by text or email and please include your potluck dish:
901-921-1630 or shirley@shirleykincaid.com



Greetings from the President

As I prepare these Greetings I am thinking about our upcoming journey to Omaha, Nebraska with an extension to Rapid City, South Dakota to see the Black Hills and Mt. Rushmore. Ten of us (Kathy Gardner, Emily Vergho, Rick Thomas, Diane Johnson, Geri Meltzer, Woody and Carolyn Pierce, Sandy Martin, Tina Tobias, Karen Bowyer) from the Friendship Force of Memphis are looking forward to making new friends in the upper Midwest.

I heard a lot of positive feedback from many of the 190 attendees of the North American Conference in Memphis, April 24-27, 2026. They seemed to love interacting with friends at the conference and exploring the city of Memphis. Twelve members from our Club (Kathy Morgan, Emily Vergho, Ray Rider, Shirley Kincaid, Tina Tobias, Annette Bickers, Rick Thomas, Geri Meltzer, Kelley Funderberg, Elizabeth Brock, Carolyn Pierce, Karen Bowyer) helped with the Memphis Concierge Table at Registration and/or attended sessions. Some takeaways from the sessions expressed by our members were the following:

- Since there were no requested inbounds from other countries to the USA, we were encouraged by Jeremi Snook, President & CEO of Friendship Force International, to link up with other clubs and offer a themed Special Journey. Memphis has offered a Blues History Tour, and we are planning to offer another one in September 2027. It was suggested that we team up with another music city such as New Orleans to extend our music-themed journey.
- Other suggestions were to collaborate with Birmingham on "Southern Gardens and Art" and/or "Civil Rights and Cuisine". Once a journey is

planned, we should send invitations to our friends in clubs in Canada, Europe, South America and Asia.

- Increase membership by offering more activities (Birmingham offers 3 activities and Minneapolis offers 7 activities per month), initiating a Point System (We have modeled our new point system after Birmingham's.), use social media every day (We are developing our Facebook page and we use WhatsApp often.), and develop an informative Webpage. So far, to increase activities we have encouraged members to participate in the Experience Memphis Gardens Tours, attend Creative Aging concerts and plays at Theatre Memphis and the Kroc Center, and attend the Lunch and Learn Presentations at Germantown United Methodist Church. Other suggestions were to have new member orientation sessions as soon as someone joins (I am planning an orientation session for our newest members, John and Wendy Whaley, on June 27), assign mentors to new members, add new members to committees, wear Friendship Force gear, and give each member FF business cards.

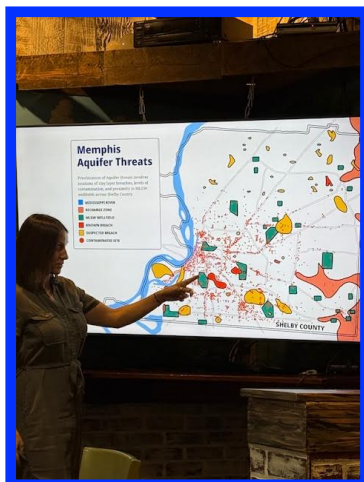
Our next General Membership Meeting is June 4 at 6:00 p.m. in the former Catholic Elementary School on the west side of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception at 1695 Central Avenue. R. Scott Williams, CEO of Discovery Park in Union City and author of Townmania, is our speaker. Scott has written about Marcus Winchester who was Memphis' first mayor, banker and postmaster. According to Scott Williams, "Winchester led efforts to transform the fourth Chickasaw bluff into a thriving commercial center." Scott grew up in the Fox Meadows area of Memphis and worked in Memphis before moving to Washington, DC to direct the "Newseum" and then returned to Tennessee when Discovery Park opened. He earned a degree in journalism at the University of Memphis, and held advertising positions at Elvis Presley Enterprises, Service Master and Baptist Memorial

Health Care. Please let Shirley Kincaid or Harriet Skupin know what you plan to bring to the potluck dinner on June 4.



An upcoming activity is on August 13 at 6:45 until 8:00 p.m. at the Eads Civic Center, 12365 Washington Road in Eads, TN. It is an opportunity to participate in free line and square dance lessons with the Top Spinners Square Dance Club. Please let me know if you would like to join several of us for this event.

At our last General Membership meeting on April 9, we approved a Point System. The Reporting Form will be attached to this newsletter. Sarah Houston, Executive Director of Protect our Aquifer, presented a program about the valuable and unique aquifer that is underneath the City of Memphis and much of West Tennessee. She emphasized that the three greatest dangers to this resource are breaks in the clay layer above it allowing pollutants to contaminate our drinking water, over pumping thereby reducing the aquifer and industrial development in the recharge zone surrounding the aquifer.



I hope that you enjoy a happy summer. I look forward to seeing you on June 4 at our next meeting!

By Karen Bowyer

Upcoming Board and General Membership Meetings

- * September 13, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m., Board Meeting at the home of Karen Bowyer.
- * October 8, 6:00 p.m., Potluck Dinner and General Membership meeting at the Junior League Building at the corner of Highland and Central Avenue.
- * November 1, 2:00 – 4:00, Board Meeting. Place to be determined.
- * December 10, 6:00 p.m., Holiday Meeting and Catered Dinner at Fratelli's in the Botanic Gardens.

Upcoming Journey Opportunities by Rick Thomas, journey coordinator and Karen Bowyer, assistant coordinator

The sections below describe the status of journeys for the rest of 2026 and for 2027. More information will be forthcoming.

2026 Activities

Outbound journey to Pecs, Hungary: This journey was originally scheduled for September of 2026. However, with the unrest in the Middle East and soaring gas prices, several ambassadors have decided to opt out. Further, the president of the Pecs clubs says that a lot of flights into there have been cancelled. As a result, this journey is being postponed and probably cannot be rescheduled until 2028.

Friendly jaunt to Nashville and environs: We are going to offer the jaunt to Tennessee again this year with a tentative date of September 17-19 (Thursday-Saturday). This 3-day / 2-night trip will include a number of attractions in Nashville, Franklin and along the way. Rick Thomas is coordinating this journey. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the next Friendship Force meeting.

2027 Activities



Outbound journey to Southwest Florida: We have been invited to visit the Southwest Florida club in February of 2027. The club is located on the western coast of Florida (Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda and Naples). Dates have not been determined but we are hoping for very early in February. Rick Thomas and Karen Bowyer are coordinating the journey. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the next Friendship Force meeting.

Inbound journey from Austin, TX: We have been offered an inbound journey from Austin to Memphis in March of 2027. We are hoping to arrange this early in the month of March to avoid the Easter period. We will need volunteers to help with this journey. Rick Thomas and Karen Bowyer are coordinating the journey. A sign-up sheet for volunteers will be circulated at the next Friendship Force meeting.

Outbound journey to Calgary, Canada: We have been invited to visit Calgary in June of 2027. Dates have not been set but people who visited that area rave about the attractions there. Rick Thomas and Karen Bowyer

are coordinating the journey. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the next Friendship Force meeting.

Special Blues History journey: We have been asked by Friendship Force International to offer the Blues History journey again next year. Last year's journey was a great success and next year's should be even better.

Although we expect ambassadors from all over the U.S. (and hopefully from overseas), we encourage our own members to participate. Finally, FFI informs us that no foreign clubs have signed up to journey to the U.S. next year. Our national leadership urges us to contact people we have visited in other countries and encourage them to visit our local clubs. Many of us have travelled with other clubs to foreign countries and we need to invite them to visit us here in the states.

New Member Spotlight



John and Wendy Whaley are recent newcomers to Memphis, arriving from Dallas, Texas. They are currently living in the HighPoint Terrace neighborhood and split their time between the two cities in order to be with their sons and family.

John worked in finance at Southern Methodist University and later practiced as a professional counselor.

Wendy taught school and was an active community volunteer. Wendy and John met in Washington DC while working at a major consulting firm. They've been married since 1980, and they are looking forward to meeting new friends at Friendship Force Memphis.



Sunshine News

Shirley Kincaid, as sunshine chair, enjoys sending cards and notes for birthdays, special occasions, and get well wishes, etc. Please let Shirley know who needs a card. shirley@shirleykincaid.com



Friendship Force Pledge: As a member of Friendship Force, I recognize that I can make a difference. I have a mission to be a friend to the people of the world. As I embark upon this adventure, I know that others will be watching. I know that through my example to my fellow citizens and the people of other nations, the cause of friendship, love and peace can be advanced. I can make a difference.



Friendship Force Song

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me;
let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God our creator, children all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, may this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.



Stay close to people who give peace to your soul.

POINTS SYSTEM FOR THE FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF MEMPHIS

BI-MONTHLY REPORT FORM FOR 2026

Name: _____ Date: _____

Report for the following months of 2026: _____

Board of Directors - Points Per Year

- _____ President – 12 Points
- _____ Vice President – 8 Points
- _____ Secretary – 8 Points
- _____ Treasurer – 8 Points
- _____ Journey Coordinator - 12 Points
- _____ Assistant Journey Coordinator - 6 Points
- _____ Data Manager – 5 Points
- _____ Social Media Administrator (FFI, local website ffmem.com, WhatsApp) – 5 Points

Standing Committee Chairs - Points Per Year

- _____ Program – 6 Points
- _____ Social – 6 Points
- _____ Publicity – 6 Points
- _____ Newsletter – 10 Points
- _____ Sunshine – 6 Points

Journeys – Points Per Journey

- _____ Assistant Inbound/Outbound Coordinator per visit – 3 Points
- _____ Home Hosting – 2 Points per guest per night
- _____ Day Hosting as a driver - 2 Points per guest per day
- _____ Dinner Hosting – 5 Points
- _____ Host for Welcome or Farewell Party – 5 Points
- _____ Journey Booklet Preparation and Printing– 4 Points
- _____ Participate in an Outbound Journey of another club – 3 Points
- _____ Participate in an Independent or Special Journey –3 Points
- _____ Attend a North America Regional Conference –3 Points
- _____ Attend an International FF conference – 5 Points

Other Service Opportunities

- _____ Host Board Meeting at Member's Home – 5 Points
- _____ Organize a Day Trip or Local Activity– 3 Points
- _____ Serve as Mentor/Buddy for New Member – 3 Points
- _____ Attend Friendship Force Events* and/or Local Activity** - 1 Point each
- _____ Present a Program for a General Membership Meeting – 3 Points
- _____ Bring Prospective Members to FF Events - 1 Point for each prospective member
- _____ Your Prospective Member Joins Friendship Force – 3 Points for each new member

*Events are the following: General Membership Meeting, Board Meeting, New Member Orientation, Let's Eat Out (LEO), Friendly Jaunts, Day Trips, attendance at any Inbound Journey event

**Local activities include the following with a Friendship Force group: movie nights, concerts, theater performances, lectures, exhibits, festivals, and similar activities.

It is the Member's responsibility to submit points bi-monthly to the Data Manager, TinaTobias at ti3an5@gmail.com. Reports are due at the end of February, April, June, August, October, and December. Points earned will be retroactive to January 1, 2026.

This Points System will determine participants for travel if a journey is oversubscribed.