

September 2021 Newsletter

FFWM <FFwesternmichigan@gmail.com>

Wed 9/1/2021 7:15 AM

To: Marcia Ellis <marcia.ellis@wmich.edu>



friendship force

WESTERN MICHIGAN

<https://www.friendshipforcewmich.org/>

A Message From Our President

Let's Continue to Engage

Labor Day, the unofficial end-of-summer milestone, is just around this weekend's corner. Hard to believe. Labor Day is usually the kickoff weekend for collegiate football. Since I am not one to enjoy the heat of summer and since I am someone who really enjoys college football (Go Iowa Hawkeyes!), I am always ready to welcome September. Labor Day celebrates the contributions and achievements of the American worker. I believe that, on a STEM basis (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), whatever this country commits itself to achieving, we can achieve it! But do we have the STEAM (add the Arts) to solve the problems that are more personal than technical? To me, the Arts are about a personal connection. Early in the morning

of August 24th, a small group of FFWM members participated in a virtual international arts festival sponsored by the Tokyo Friendship Force club. *See article below.* We sang to the tune of "This Land is Your Land". We changed the words and built a slide show, taking those watching on a singing photo tour of the countryside of Michigan. We made a personal connection, engaging with the people watching in Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, etc.

Speaking of the arts, on September 22nd, we will host our first visiting ambassadors in nearly two years! *See article below.* We will enjoy Art Prize with them, tour the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, etc. And on the evening of September 24th, our club will celebrate thirty years of Friendship Force! This is a very nice milestone. Thirty years of engagement! How about another thirty? I'd like to see that! If our club makes it to sixty years, we will have proven the value of international friendship and the power of looking to "understand and accept" rather than "question and distrust".

Let's continue to engage with each other and with the outside world and break down those imaginary barriers that restrict our ability to enjoy a more peaceful world. Let's truly be a force of friendship!

FFWM 30th Anniversary Celebration

We are celebrating the 30th anniversary of our club!
You can refer to the [February and March FFWM Newsletters](#) to read about the history of our club.

We will have a special evening of middle eastern food and a special program, "An Immigrant Experience".

Do you know your family background story of how they came to the USA?

September 24, 6pm
Walden Woods Clubhouse (Dunns Ridge, Kalamazoo)

Bring your own alcoholic beverage. Mint tea will be available with the meal.

There is no cost for FFWM members.

Cost for non-members is \$10pp. Come and celebrate with us!

RSVP to ellism@wmich.edu

PLEASE NOTE:

In order to decrease potential harm to each other, and to satisfy the commitment we made to our visiting ambassadors, all participants should be fully vaccinated for Covid-19. In addition masks should be worn at all times except when seated for dining. Limited outside seating will be available while eating.

Upcoming Journey Friendship and Art



Pam Sackett and Marcia Ellis are journey coordinators for our inbound journey, "Friendship and Art". FFWM will be hosting 10 guests from our neighboring clubs.

Guests will arrive at host homes by 4 PM on Wednesday, September 22. Departure is the morning of Saturday, September 25.

Completed vaccinations are required for all hosts and guests.

Our itinerary is as follows:

Guests will arrive at 4pm on Sept. 22. Dinner hosts will provide dinners for guests and their hosts.

Thursday, Sept. 23 is a Grand Rapids day. We will enjoy Art Prize 2021, Fredrick Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, and possibly the Meyer May house (waiting to hear from them).

Friday, Sept. 24 we begin with a walking tour of downtown Kalamazoo presented by Lynn Houghton. At 2pm we have a tour of the Kalamazoo Institute of Art.

At 6pm we will have our 30th anniversary celebration of our club and say farewell to our guests, who will depart the next morning.

All FFWM members are encouraged to participate in the activities!

Lake Escape

Saturday, August 21 A Lake Escape! 17 FFWM members spent the afternoon kayaking, riding the pontoon, swimming, playing yard games and relaxing at Marci & Roy's lake house after having lunch and a brew at Final Gravity in Decatur. Dan Grinwis had the fastest wrist, Paul Franklin had the best water aim, and Peg Stanitzek shot the ball into the bucket!!! And we celebrated Lyn & Dave Hargreaves' 56th Anniversary! The weather was perfect!



For more pictures check out our FB page:
<https://www.facebook.com/friendshipforcewesternmichigan>

FFWM Sings in a Music Festival from Japan to the World!





On Monday morning at 7am several FFWM members participated in Music Festival from Japan to the World. They sang "This Land Is My Land" written by Woodie Guthrie and adapted for our club by Jerry and Louise Potratz.

The music and art from Japan were inspiring and the 8 FFWM members above enjoyed sharing with the world a photo slide show of West Michigan landmarks and people. We even saw some of the people that visited us here in 2019 and those that hosted us, in Japan, in 2017. It was nice to connect with our friends and make some new introductions! Our singing photo tour was very well received. Perhaps we will be one of those "destination hot spots" for future Journeys!





Making Baklava and Grape leaf Rolls!





Several club members made baklava and rolled grape leaves for our 30th anniversary celebration on September 24. Peg Stanitzek drove from Grand Rapids to join the many Kalamazoo members! It was a busy morning!!

Board Nominations

Please consider Board service!
Send all nominations for board members to
Jerrypotratz@hotmail.com.

Have You Registered With FFI Yet?

FFI Online is now live. It will eventually house all our member resources and exclusive member-only content, and keep you up to speed with news from FFI and around the world.

Eventually the member portal will be used to sign up for journeys, pay any fees etc.

The minimum information required to sign up is your name, club and email address.

Be sure to sign up if you have not already done so!

Here is the website sign-up

page. https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/sign_in

Travels

Wonder where your friends are traveling recently?

If you have taken a trip--even a weekender--please share your story with us! Include pictures, too!!

Send your story and pictures to ellism@wmich.edu.

FFWM Newsletter

Contact us: FFwesternmichigan@gmail.com

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