

## July 2022 FFWM Newsletter

FFWM <FFwesternmichigan@gmail.com>

Sat 7/2/2022 1:25 PM

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

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## July 2022 FFWM Newsletter





**Happy 4th of July!**

## **President's Message**

As mentioned in June's newsletter, we continue to monitor covid rates in our three primary counties which house Grand Rapids, Holland, and Kalamazoo. The number of positive cases are down in all three of these counties since May and the current covid level is rated as "low". Obviously, covid is still out there and we need to be mindful of it, but we are respectfully moving ahead with our summer and fall social activities.

Game Day (see article) was a big success and we hope to have another such gathering in the near future. We will also be having our July LEO on the 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 in Grand Rapids (see below). I hope to

see as many of you as possible at the LEO.

We are also getting ready for our first international hosting since pre-pandemic days! In 2019, we hosted our friends from Aichi Japan (who we visited in the Fall of 2017) and the English Language Japanese group, including children, from Tokyo and other cities. It will be three years in-between our hosting of international Friendship Force clubs. Let's celebrate our effort to return to normalcy by **everyone** fully engaging, in some way, with our German guests!

## Germany is coming! Looking for Hosts!

Planning is underway now for FFWM's hosting of our guests from Germany. Lubeck will be the primary club visiting us, but there will also be members of other German FFI clubs in the group. A total of nine guests will arrive in Kalamazoo on Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. They will stay their first night in a hotel to get acquainted with each other and their official journey begins on Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. They will leave Kalamazoo on Tuesday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, and head to Atlanta for a few days of touring before they travel on to visit the Huntsville, Alabama, Friendship Force club.

We need Home Hosts, Dinner Hosts, and Day Hosts to meet the needs of our German guests and to show them all that Western Michigan has to offer. Jerry Potratz, assisted by Louise, and John Richmond, assisted by Patty, are the Journey Coordinators for this hosting. Nancy Draayer will be helping with day-to-day logistics. Please let any one of these club members know that you are willing to host our German guests in a Home, Dinner, or Day host capacity. All of our visiting ambassadors are fully vaccinated and boosted and they would prefer that their Home Hosts are similarly protected from covid.

**Please email Louise if you can home host: [LpL4@hotmail.com](mailto:LpL4@hotmail.com).**

## Getting Ready for Turkey and

# Azerbaijan

We have 12 FF ambassadors visiting FF of Baku, Azerbaijan and 16 ambassadors visiting FF of Bursa, Turkey. We depart September 22 and it is coming up quickly!! Preparations have been going on for 2 years for this journey! We will also have a tour of Turkey in addition to visiting the clubs.

## The Results Are In! Where Oh Where Do You Want to Travel Domestically in 2023?

In last month's newsletter, we asked our members to rank FFWM's preferred domestic journey destination for 2023. Four wonderful club destinations were listed:

- Denver, Colorado
- Eastern Washington – Northern Idaho
- Sacramento, California
- Baton Rouge, Louisiana

**The clear preferred destination was Eastern Washington – Northern Idaho** ... chosen by nearly 60% of the voters as first choice (no other location had more than 17% of the first-place vote) and by over 80% of the voters as either their first or second choice.

Our board will do what we can to pursue Eastern Washington – Northern Idaho as our domestic journey for 2023. Perhaps we can also get a journey to one of these other destinations. Denver was listed as first or second choice on nearly 50% of the votes submitted.

## LEO

Our next LEO will be Wednesday, July 6, at 6pm at Mithu Sri Lankan & Indian Cuisine, 309 Kalamazoo Ave SE, Grand Rapids. **Please RSVP to [jerrypotratz@hotmail.com](mailto:jerrypotratz@hotmail.com)**. We hope to see you there!

# Game Day!



**On Sunday, June 26<sup>th</sup>**, 22 members met at Walden Woods Clubhouse for a game day and potluck. The food was fantastic and the camaraderie was even better! We played outdoor lawn games and indoor board games. It was a beautiful day and a good time was had by all. We even tried our hand at a new table-top game called Skittles. It was a nice opportunity to get to know each other a little better.

# Travel Opportunities

Click the link below to review a catalog of Special Journeys that are currently being offered by other FFI clubs. Perhaps there is a journey that interests you!

[2022 Journey Catalog.](#)

## Travels

Marcia Ellis, Lisa Fisher, Nancy Draayer, Pat Litwiller, Susan Andress and Jeff Palmer traveled to France for a bike and boat trip. Some of us visited Dijon, Lyon, and Paris in addition to the bike trip which began in Avignon. Along the way we visited Arles and several small towns. We ended our biking in Aigues-Mortes on the Mediterranean Sea. Southern France is beautiful with many small farms and orchards in the countryside. So much to see and enjoy (and eat)!!





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