

## 2023 March FFWM Newsletter

FFWM <FFwesternmichigan@gmail.com>

Wed 3/1/2023 12:03 AM

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

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## Presidents' Message

You may have gotten an email saying that you haven't been opening your FFWM newsletter. This newsletter is the best way to find out what is happening in our club. It tells about upcoming LEOs and/or events that you won't want to miss. It also includes photos of these activities. It may also include photos and articles from our members of their recent travels. You will definitely want information on the upcoming journeys both by our club and other clubs that you can join in their journeys. Did you know there are Global journeys you can join? Global journeys are for anyone from all clubs around the world. They may have a special theme. For example, Lisa Fisher and I are going on a music and art journey in Germany this summer. If you are interested in learning more about journeys available, the journey catalogs are always included in our newsletter. Find the one you want and apply online. Marci and those who contribute put a lot of time and effort into these

newsletters to make sure you have the information you need to join in the fun.

Speaking of getting more involved, we are still looking for members to join the membership committee. Everything you need to know is in the February newsletter. Loie Dye Gustafson is the chairperson. It's not a difficult job, just provide assistance where needed. There are many ways to become more involved with our club so please consider joining in and making your experience more rewarding.

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## March LEO

Join us on March 12th at 12 noon at the Blue Dolphin, 502 South Burdick St. Kalamazoo. RSVP to Shirley Wiersma by Friday, March 10 at Shirley\_Wiersma@yahoo.com.

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## Journeys



### Belgium added to Germany Journey!

Friendship Force of Limburg, Belgium, has been added to our itinerary for this summer's journey. FFWM will be hosted by Metropole Ruhr, Germany, from June 26 – July 2 and then we will travel to the Limburg Province to be hosted in Belgium from July 3 until July 9. This promises to be a very enjoyable journey. Louise and Jerry Potratz have volunteered to be co-coordinators for what should be a most enjoyable trip.

Limburg is known as the green province and biking paradise of Belgium. Our hosts are eager to show us its most picturesque corners. If you might be

interested in this journey, please send an email to Louise at [LPL4@hotmail.com](mailto:LPL4@hotmail.com).

## Summary of our Upcoming Journeys

### Domestic Outbound Journey:

May 15 to 28

- Eastern Washington / Northern Idaho: arrive on Monday, May 15th, depart on Monday, May 22nd

- Lower Columbia: arrive on Monday, May 22nd, depart on Sunday, May 28th

Journey Coordinators are Nancy Draayer and Lisa Fisher.

If you are interested in going on this journey email Nancy Draayer at [ncdraayer@gmail.com](mailto:ncdraayer@gmail.com).

### International Outbound Journey:

June 26 to July 9

Friendship Force of Metropole Ruhr (Germany) and Friendship Force of Limburg (Belgium).

Journey Coordinators are Louise and Jerry Potratz.

If interested in this journey send an email to Louise at [lp14@hotmail.com](mailto:lp14@hotmail.com)

### Domestic Inbound Journey:

July 23 to 30

Friendship Force of Orlando will visit us.

Journey Coordinators are Pam Sackett and Mary Giddings

Please email Pam at [tulikivi@msn.com](mailto:tulikivi@msn.com), or Mary at [fgidrow@gmail.com](mailto:fgidrow@gmail.com), if you are interested in home hosting or day hosting our visiting ambassadors.

### International Inbound Journey:

Still working on this.

**Tentative** calendar at a glance. Green is outbound. Blue is inbound.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>MAY</b>	15 Eastern Washington/Northern Idaho	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 Depart E Washington/N Idaho Begin Lower Columbia	23	24	25	26	27
28 Depart Lower Columbia	29					
<b>JUNE</b>						
25	26 Metropole Ruhr	27	28	29	30	1 <b>JULY</b>
2 Depart	3 Limburg	4	5	6	7	8
9 Depart	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 FF Greater Orlando	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Depart	31					

## Join Our Membership Committee

Please help Loie Dye with the Membership Committee! Please email her at [wordpictures@gmail.com](mailto:wordpictures@gmail.com). Join this committee and have some fun positioning our club for the future!

## Survey Results

We received responses from 22 members for our 2024 outbound journey survey. New Zealand was the top destination with seven votes. Australia and Egypt tied for second place with 6 votes each. These three countries were provided to FFI as our choices for a 2024 international journey.

## A Chance Meeting

“IT’S THE PEOPLE I MEET ALONG THE WAY.”

People, places, things....all fascinating aspects of travel. Taos, NM -- January --lovely quiet resort. Low season. The bar was the happening place to grab a light meal and socialize. Within five minutes of being seated, the bartender was wishing fond farewells to seatmates who were from of all places: Kalamazoo. Paul and I quickly established that connection with him and immediately he asked, “Did you know John Young?” Well I surely did! My children celebrated their first communions with Father Young, at our home. He was a young new priest at our parish, and we were very close with him during my 20s. Turns out, Pablo was his nephew and travelled to Kalamazoo when Fr. Young was ill and dying in recent years. His deeply felt sharing with us over the next few days evoked so many memories and feelings about that era of young parenthood. I’ll be forever grateful to Pablo. He is a dear.

Submitted by Alice Asmus



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## Looking for Contributors

Would you like to contribute something or share a travel experience in this newsletter? If you are willing to share your adventures, a photo, or anything related to travel, cultures, places you've visited, please email your article to Marcia Ellis at [ellism@wmich.edu](mailto:ellism@wmich.edu).

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## MyFFI

The members-only portal, [my.friendshipforce.org](http://my.friendshipforce.org), is the go-to place for news, journey opportunities, payments, virtual experiences and all other member-

relevant information. If you have not yet sign up, click [HERE](#) for detailed instructions.

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## 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!

[2023 Journey Catalog](#)

[2023 Club to Club Journeys](#)

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## Chinese Lantern Festival Event

A fifteen-member group attended the Lantern Festival Gala on February 4th, at Chenery Auditorium, in Kalamazoo, marking the first full moon of the new lunar year and the end of the Lunar New Year celebration. The attendance was standing room only and the gala was very entertaining. It provided us with an enjoyable look into Chinese culture and art, featuring traditional dragon costumes, a professional Chinese opera singer, spectacular long-sleeve dancing, Comstock elementary children dressed in bunny outfits to recognize the Chinese Year of the Rabbit, and a premier performance of The Moon Over the River on a Spring Night, written by Julian Kuerti (Conductor of the Kalamazoo Symphony) and performed by an ensemble from the orchestra. The Gala showed off incredible professional artistry and local community engagement and support.

After the Gala, we had a lot of good conversation and food at Sichuan Cuisine. It was a very enjoyable and culturally-informative outing.



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Friendship Force of Western Michigan has  
dedicated a donation to  
**Global Ties Kalamazoo**

in honor of  
**Friendship Force Lubeck, Germany in  
Recognition of their September 2023 Visit  
with Friendship Force Western Michigan**



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