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friendship force

WESTERN MICHIGAN

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

FFWM December 2021 Newsletter



**A Message From Our
President**

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we are coming up on the most celebrated time of the year. Has the holiday spirit caught you yet? We move quickly, don't we, from Halloween to Thanksgiving to Christmas to New Years. With this blur of hectic activity, we might lose track of what is important in life... our family and friends. These are the people that have patterned our lives, raised our spirits and made the holidays worth all of the preparation and effort. We just passed Thanksgiving, but we have nowhere near exhausted our thankfulness. We will give thanks again as we cross over into 2022.

As you think about the holidays and giving, I hope you think about giving to Friendship Force. Dig in your pocket and give "\$45 for 45" years of FFI and renew your dues and give your time to FFWM. Volunteer for one of our committees: Social (picnics, trivia, etc.), Communications (newsletter, website, etc.), or Membership (recruitment, retention, etc.). **We NEED your help AND we have FUN as we do our work.** If we are to be a viable and active club, worthy of visiting and hosting, we need our board and our committees to be successful in their efforts. WE NEED YOU!

We asked and FFI listened. We requested to host an international journey in 2022 and FFI agreed to send us **Lubeck, Germany**. They will come visit us the **last week of September in 2022**. We will now have two inbound journeys in 2022... Kern County, California (date TBD), and Lubeck! Get ready to show off western Michigan!

Trivia is coming! We will be organizing some virtual trivia nights throughout the cold and dark winter months, starting in January, so watch for additional communications and sharpen your game wits. Should be a lot of fun!

I hope to see as many of you as possible at our Holiday Party on December 6th. See below for more details!
Happy Holidays and best wishes to all!

Dues are Due!

Our annual dues are due at the holiday party on December 6. FFI

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increased our dues to \$25 and our club (FFWM) dues are \$15 for a total of \$40. Please write your check made out to FFWM and give it to Lisa Fisher at the Christmas party. Or you can mail it to her at 9704 Oakview Dr., Portage, MI 49024.

See you at the Holiday party!

<https://www.friendshipforcewmich.org/upcoming-events.html>



December 6 at 6pm is our **Holiday party!**

It will be at Martell's, 3501 Greenleaf Blvd, Kalamazoo. Martells has excellent food and a beautiful setting. Their menu for our event is [here](#). The price for dinner is \$28.95 + 18% gratuity for a total per person of \$34.16 plus any drinks you may order. They will not do individual checks except for your drinks so be prepared to submit a check or cash for \$34.16 per person to FFWM.

Committee Service

Please consider serving on one of our Committees!

Just contact jerrypotratz@hotmail.com.

There are openings on the Social Committee (picnics, trivia, etc.), the Membership Committee (recruitment, retention, etc.), and the Communications Committee (Facebook, web page, newsletter, etc.).

We want you!! Come join us in the fun! Just let Jerry know!

jerrypotratz@hotmail.com

Have You Registered With FFI Yet?

22 members of our club have registered.

If you have not. . . **PLEASE DO IT NOW!!!**

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. A recent message from FFI through this website informed us of an update of the latest features that were added:

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

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FF of Greater Detroit is being hosted by our old friends, FF Southwest Florida this February 22-27, 2022.

All Ambassadors must provide image of full COVID vaccination and abide during the journey with any masking requests made by FF of SW Florida hosts or venues.

All Home and Dinner Hosts for FF of SW Florida will also be fully vaccinated.

Program highlights are likely to include (but subject to change)

- Evening Pirate Cruise with dinner

- Ringling Art Museum, Gardens and Home Tour

- Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens

- Burroughs Home & Gardens

If interested, contact FF of Greater Detroit's Ambassador Journey Coordinator – Linda White at lwhite626@gmail.com.

Travels

Wonder where your friends are traveling recently?

If you have taken a trip--even a weekender--please share your story

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with us! Include pictures, too!!

Send your story and pictures to ellism@wmich.edu.[Translate ▼](#)

Lisa Fisher and Nancy Draayer spent a couple weeks in Turkey in October. Their airline vouchers were going to expire so they had to use them. Nancy wrote this note to us:

Some of you may have apprehensions about traveling internationally during the pandemic. I had those apprehensions as well, but with routine precautions and allowances for testing, it was an enjoyable experience. Yes, you may have to show proof of vaccination, take a Covid test, and wear your mask in airports and on long flights, but for me it was worth it to be able to travel again.

Using an unused airline ticket from a previously cancelled trip, I was off on an adventure with Lisa Fisher. We arrived in Istanbul after about a 10 hour flight. Istanbul is a lovely city with history dating back hundreds of years. Some of you may be going to Turkey with FF soon, so I recommend the usual sights: the spice market, Blue mosque, Hagia Sophia, etc. I also found it interesting to visit the Topkapi Palace, headquarters of the Ottoman sultans dating back as far as the 15th century compared with the ostentatious Dolmabahce Palace used by the Ottoman sultans from 1856 to 1922. One of my favorite experiences was going to the Seven Hills Restaurant terrace overlooking the Hagia Sofia after sundown during the call to prayer with the Blue Mosque in the background. Nancy Draayer

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Happy Holidays!

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