

**FFWM March 2021 Newsletter**

FFWM &lt;FFwesternmichigan@gmail.com&gt;

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# FFWM March 2021 Newsletter

## A Note From the President

As FFI goes forward, it is going to blend its future with a little of its past! On February 9<sup>th</sup>, I participated in a discussion with FFI CEO Jeremi Snook about branding. Jeremi has been holding a number of these meetings and this particular event was attended by 26 people from around the world. The recent FFI tagline of "Experience different views. Discover common ground" is going to be replaced with the tagline used when FFI began in 1977: "A world of friends is a world of peace." In addition to the tagline change, FFI's logo is going to undergo a font change, along with subtle changes in color. Why make these changes? FFI is definitely becoming more

international in focus. When the new website is revealed this summer, it is going to welcome members in multiple languages. The old tagline did not translate very well outside the English language. I applaud FFI for focusing on how to improve its global platform. This will help FFI be more effective and its member clubs more diverse. We should all benefit from the advantages gained by this global perspective.

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, I participated in a discussion with leadership from other Great Lakes clubs. We discussed member engagement, vaccination policies, dues, etc. FFWM, with 63 members, is the third largest Great Lakes club behind Dayton (100 members) and Cincinnati (81). Other Great Lakes clubs are located in Northeast Ohio, Lansing, and Detroit. All clubs are looking forward to the day when we can once again host and travel.

FFWM's Social Committee expects that our club activities will remain virtual through this May. We are looking forward to vaccine-enabled get togethers as soon as we can gather safely! In the meantime, take care of yourselves! I hope to see you at our March 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> virtual events!

Jerry

## North Korea

### **March 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm: A Discussion on North Korea**

FFWM members are curious people. We want to experience the world around us. We usually broaden our perspectives through traveling and hosting, but on March 10<sup>th</sup> we are going to look into the land where no one can journey!

For purposes of our discussion, we have previously suggested three books for your consideration:

1. *Escape from Camp 14: One Man's Remarkable Odyssey from North Korea to Freedom in the West*, by Blaine Harden
2. *The Girl with Seven Names: A North Korean Defector's Story*, by Lee Hyeoseo
3. *A River of Darkness: One Man's Escape from North Korea*, by Masaji Ishikawa, Risa Kobayashi

If you have read another book, or magazine article, or watched a documentary on North Korea... or you are just curious... just join us! We will learn from each other!

Back on February 8<sup>th</sup>, a number of our members watched the World Affairs Council of West Michigan's Great Decisions lecture titled "North Korea: Getting Diplomacy Back on Track". I really learned a lot from this lecture. I'll share more of what I learned, when we meet on March 10<sup>th</sup>!

I'm looking forward to seeing you on March 10<sup>th</sup>. I expect that North Korea is going to become a lot less mysterious after our discussion.

Jerry

## Where In The World? Our New Game

**Where: Zoom on your computer**

**Time: 7pm**

**When: March 24**

This should be a lot of fun and we would like to encourage all club members to participate.

Can you take a few minutes and go through some of your old photos of your travels to look for a picture?

This picture could be of somewhere or something local. Find a photo that has something **identifiable** to give a hint of where the picture was taken.

- Photos don't have to be from Friendship Force trips. They can be from your personal travels. The only requirement is that it must be from your own personal photo collection. No web-accessed photos should be used.
- For purposes of this exercise, photos should be of major landmarks, or popular destinations, that have some global

relevance and are not so discreet as to be unidentifiable... just like in our Trivia Night games.

- Since many of our memories might be displayed around our homes in actual picture frames... what?!?!... it is okay to take a phone photo of your photograph and submit the electronic version.
- Since we hope that all members participate, please limit your entry to no more than three (3) photos.
- Please indicate "where" the photo was taken and "what" is in the photo with each submission.
- The social committee will select the final game entrees from all submitted photos.
- Please send your photos electronically to [jerrypotratz@hotmail.com](mailto:jerrypotratz@hotmail.com)
- Please submit your photos by **Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. Hurry!!!**

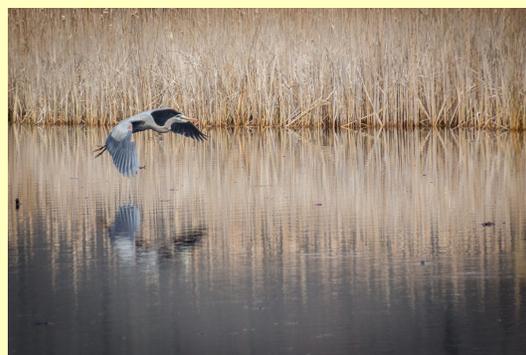
## Pam and Stan's African Adventure



## Pan & Stan's African Adventure part 1.

On February 24, 30 members and 11 guests (FF SW FL) were in attendance via Zoom to hear about Pam & Stan's journey, part 1. We went from a homestay in Nairobi, Kenya to Uganda, Rwanda, Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti in a big bus! Stan did an outstanding job giving a riveting account of the first part of their journey! More adventure is coming soon!

## Photocluster



We have just finished photos of reflections.  
Check out the photography our photocluster group is doing at our  
Shutterfly website:  
[HERE.](#)

## Turkey



## Sait Tosun

Bademli, Bursa, Turkey

Greetings to my distinguished friends abroad,  
Hope you are all fine and far off epidemic.  
This is an announcement of my virtual presentation about the city  
where I live, Bursa-Turkey through the zoom meeting of FFI  
(Friendship Force Int'l) virtual journeys "Faces and Places".

**WHERE:** Zoom meeting on your computer – smart phone, etc. with  
internet connection

**DATE & TIME:** March 13, Saturday at 06:00 p.m. (GMT/UTC)

**FREE**

**REGISTRATION** (required): <https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/> Scroll down the page. (Following your registration  
Zoom Meeting ID and password will be sent to your email)

So far, you might be visited Turkey or have future plans to this unique  
Eurasian country. Get ideas or share your experiences by joining this  
virtual visit.

I appreciate your participation and have a chance to meet you through  
this virtual zoom meeting.

# FFWM History

## FFWM Timeline

Last month you read about the interview Laura Jane Colber had with Jennette Parkhurst. In this newsletter is a timeline of the history of our club to go along with the previous article.

**1983** Marian Szudera first became involved in Friendship Force when she visited a club in Guanajuato, Mexico with FF of Detroit club.

**1989** Hosted two women from Chiapas, Mexico. Alma Garciaprieto and her niece Carola Margarita Dominguez Blaboa from Tuxtla Gutierrez, Mexico.

**1989** Ann and Larry Mesbergen and Jennette and Curtis Parkhurst visited Newcastle, South Wales, Australia with the Cincinnati, OH Friendship Force club and decided to form a local chapter.

**1990, March** FFWM was an official chapter of FFI. There were 33 members from Kent, Ottawa, Allegan and Kalamazoo counties. Meetings were held at Heather Hills Retirement Village in Grand Rapids.

**1990, May** FFWM hosted its first international exchange from Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia. Fifteen guests came and asked that they be hosted together in Hopkins/Wayland area. There was a scramble for housing. FFWM had members from Muskegon, Newago, Montcalm, Ottawa, Kent, Ionia, Allegan, Barry and Kalamazoo counties.

**1990, August** FFWM hosted a group from Dieren, Netherlands.

**1991** FFWM hosted a group of 17 from Kiel and Schliswig/Holstein, Germany.

**1992** FFWM hosted two women from New Zealand.  
FFWM raised money by selling Pavlovas at the Calder Festival in Grand Rapids.

**1998** Seventh year of selling Pavlovas. They donated the funds to the Santa Claus Girls, the Salvation Army, God's kitchen and various international programs.

FFWM hosted a club from Memphis, TN.

This is the end of the interview notes.

Our website has pictures and information about exchanges (journeys) dating from **2009**.

[Inbound Journeys](#)

[Outbound Journeys](#)

[facebook.com]



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