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2025 Journey Preview

Outbound Stratford/St. Marys, Ontario, Canada.....
..... Sept. 22-29

2026 Journey Assignments

Inbound: FF Connecticut..... April TBD
Outbound: FF Tallassee, FL..... Date TBD
Outbound: FF Southland & Taupo, New Zealand
..... November TBD (2 weeks)

Club Website: www.friendshipforceknoxville.org
FFK on Facebook: Friendship Force of Knoxville
Club E-mail: FriendshipForceKnoxville@gmail.com
My Friendship Force: <https://my.friendshipforce.org>

August 26th Event: Two Experiences of Poland

On Tuesday, August 26th, Joan Turbyville and Courtney Shea will share two different experiences of their journeys to Poland.

Joan traveled to Poland two years ago with a church group of 30 other people on a pilgrimage. A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a sacred place to usher into the presence of God. Poland is considered the most Catholic country in Europe. The trip focused on visiting shrines, churches and other relevant landmarks.



Courtney went to Poland last month to visit the facilitator/deputy mayor with the Open World delegation of Polish mayors who FFK hosted in 2023. She also toured other parts of Poland, met with Polish representatives of American Councils for International Education, and spent several days with one of the mayors who was part of the delegation. While there, Courtney explored with her hosts and guides the role of the Polish government today and the plans they have for the future development of their country following many years of oppression from neighboring countries.

Through photographs and discussion, Joan and Courtney will share the beauty of the country as well as its culture, history, faith, resilience and dreams for the future.

Event: Two Experiences of Poland by Joan Turbyville & Courtney Shea

Date:August 26

Time:6:30 p.m. Social; 7:00 p.m. Program

Location:Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (TVUUC)
.....2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919



Note from the President

It is difficult to believe that it is already August, where has the summer gone? It is even more difficult to believe that there are only four more months of the year remaining.

It has been a few weeks since our last program on July 2 to our upcoming program on Augusts 26. This month's program should offer an interesting insight to Poland. Both Joan Turbyville and Courtney Shea are joining up to share experiences that they both had while traveling to Poland. It sounds like they each experienced unique perspectives of the country and its people and culture. Please come join us to hear about their trips and feel free to bring a friend.



We moved the September program so that those that were participating in the journey to Stratford-St. Marys, Canada, would be able to attend. Just two weeks after the August program, we will enjoy a tasty potluck themed around international dishes. I look forward to trying new dishes from other countries. Please come join your fellow FFK members and bring a dish to share either from your cultural ancestry or one that you enjoyed while on a journey or at an ethnic restaurant. Again, feel free to invite a friend.

We have successfully completed our four scheduled recruiting events. At this time no additional events will be scheduled until after our business meeting on October 28. Look for a letter from me to each member regarding the subject of this meeting and the business topics to be covered. I will continue to make my plea to the membership for a volunteer to be nominated for the 2026 Board of Directors positions of President and Communications Chairperson to be voted on in November.

Rounding out the year will be our holiday party to be held on December 2. Mark this date on your calendar. Read more about this event in this newsletter with more details to come as the date gets closer. Consider asking a friend!

Karen Scott, President



“Thou hast made me known to friends whom I knew not.
Thou hast given me seats in homes not my own.
Thou hast brought the distant near and made a brother of the stranger.”

Rabindranath Tagore from *Old and New*

September 9th Meeting is an International Potluck

Come join us for a night of good food and great company in the home of our member, Susan Dakak.

What: International Potluck Supper

Bring your favorite international dish to share
Soft drinks and a meat dish will be provided

When: Tuesday, September 9th

Time: 6 pm - 8:30pm

Where: 11235 West Point Drive, 37922



Susan will talk about her family's role in the formation of FFK and her parents' involvement over the years.

Please RSVP to Liz Gregor at elizabethgregor@hotmail.com (or 865-964-8125)
before September 1st

Heads-Up! Save the Date for the FFK Holiday Dinner Party



Save the date on your calendar for a fun evening of fellowship and friendship as we kick off the holiday season in December.

Date: Tuesday, Dec. 2nd

Time: 5:30 pm

Location: Gourmet's Market, 5107 Kingston Pike.

More details to follow on the menu and ticket price in our next newsletter. We hope to see many of you there and encourage you to bring a friend or two, especially if they are interested in joining FFK.

Watch this space for more information soon!

The FFK 2025 & 2026 Journeys

Our club's final outgoing journey of 2025 is to FF Stratford/St Mary's, Canada from September 22-29. Eleven ambassadors are slated to attend this trip. Karen Scott is Ambassador Coordinator for this journey. All of us will be "road tripping" to Canada.

Here are our anticipated journeys for 2026:

Inbound:

April (Tentative month)- Connecticut, USA to Knoxville, USA

Outbound:

Month to be determined - Knoxville, USA to Tallahassee, Florida (new assignment).



The Villages club has disbanded, and FFI has instead reassigned us to visit Friendship Force Tallahassee. The Tallahassee club was originally part of a Florida State University group but joined FFI in 2021. Although journeys may vary, their FFI profile indicates that they usually spend one day south of Tallahassee visiting Wakulla Springs at either the St Marks Refuge or Gulf Specimen Lab. Another day may be spent slightly north in South Georgia visiting a Plantation home and the beautiful city of Thomasville, Ga. In Tallahassee, ambassadors usually tour the Goodwood Plantation, Mission San Luis, The Grove, and Maclay Gardens.

November - Knoxville, USA to Southland and Taupo, New Zealand (2 weeks)

The best time to visit New Zealand is during the summer months of December to March. Expect long, bright, sunny days and temperatures between 61°F and 75°F. It's an ideal time to visit the lovely beaches or enjoy the many outdoor activities available, such as hiking and mountain biking.

Taupo, a town near the center of New Zealand's North Island, is distinguished by its lakefront setting and outdoor sports ranging from fishing to jet-boating. The vast waters of Lake Taupo, a volcanic caldera, drain into the Huka Falls, dramatic, crystal-blue cascades reachable by hiking and biking trails. Surrounding Taupo are hot springs.

The Southland club is located in the southernmost part of the South Island. The Southland region has some unique scenery including beaches on the south coast, typical native bush with waterfalls and a petrified forest on the Catlins Southern Scenic route, wonderful views along the coast in several directions including Stewart Island, (there is the possibility of traveling to Stewart Island).



Leslie Badaines, Acting Journey Chair

Member Profiles: Karen Setzfand & Ray Simko

After looking at a number of locations in the southeast they settled on Knoxville. One of the major selling points was that is a one-day drive back to Northeast Ohio and a one-day drive to Maryland since family members lived in both of those locations.

Ray first learned about Friendship Force and joined the FF Club of Western North Carolina in 2003. In 2007 he moved back to Northeast Ohio where he joined the Friendship Force chapter there; Karen also joined Friendship Force at the same time. They joined FFK shortly after their arrival in Knoxville in 2010. Ray has 22 years of membership between three clubs and Karen has 19 years of membership between two clubs.

They were both interested in opportunities to travel domestically and internationally and enjoyed meeting people of different cultures.

Ray received a BSSS from John Carroll University and his MBA from Baldwin Wallace University. Karen received her BA degree from Ohio Wesleyan University.



Their advice to all members of FFK is to become active in every opportunity available. Offer the club your personal skills and expertise. Then everyone gains and FFK becomes a better club for everyone.

One memorable journey started with a 7-day Friendship Force visit to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, in 2014. Rather than fly they decided to drive a northern route through the Dakotas to Calgary. At the end of their stay, they drove west into British Columbia. This part of their travels took them south through the US National Park System and continued further south through New Mexico into the Texas panhandle and finally home. The 28 days of travel took them a total of 7,318 miles, visiting 16 states and two Canadian provinces.

Their final thoughts:

As a member, participate fully in the club's journeys and other activities. Don't be a member of the "Would of, Could of, Should of" Club. Time passes quickly.

2025 Upcoming Date Mark your Calendar

Virtual Board Meetings (2nd Tuesday, 2 p.m.)

Sept. 9 Oct. 14 Nov. 11 Dec. no mtg

NOTE: If you are interested in attending the virtual Board Meetings, please e-mail Betsy Tonkin (betst@mac.com) for the Zoom link.

Upcoming FFK General Events

- August 26: Two Experiences of Poland, Joan Turbyville & Courtney Shea, TVUUC
- September 9: International Theme Potluck Dinner, Susan Dakak's home; **Sept 1 RSVP Requested**
- October 28: Special Member Meeting, TVUUC
- November 25: FFK Annual Business Meeting & Officer Elections
- December 2: Holiday Event

Check newsletter articles about each event for date, time and place details.

These dates and more are on the
FFK *Event/News* web page.

2025 Club Officers & Chairpersons

Officers:

President Karen Scott
Vice President..... OPEN POSITION
Secretary Carol Ann Johnson
Treasurer Marsha Mitchell

Committee Chairpersons:

Program Chairperson OPEN POSITION
Membership Chairperson OPEN POSITION
Journey Chairperson OPEN POSITION
Communications Chairperson Janis Robinson
Club Concerns Paulette Anderson
Historian Karen Swander
Hospitality Chairperson OPEN POSITION

Host & Ambassador Coordinators are listed on the FFK *About Us* web page

FFK members can request a copy of Board meeting minutes from Janis Robinson by sending an email to FriendshipForceKnoxville@gmail.com