



friendship force
KNOXVILLE

A world of friends
is a world of peace

Volume 27, No. 2

September 2026

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Important Dates

Outbound to Taupo and Southland, New Zealand:
Nov. 1-14

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

Note From Communications Chair

This is my first newsletter for our group. Please bear with me as I attempt to take on this role. Please let me know about any club events or activities that need to be communicated to everyone.

In Friendship,

Delora Cook

Friendship Force Journeys, 2026-2027

New Zealand

Outbound: November 1-14 2026



Leslie Badaines is the ambassador coordinator for this journey. We will be joined by friends from North Carolina and Canada.

Costa Rica

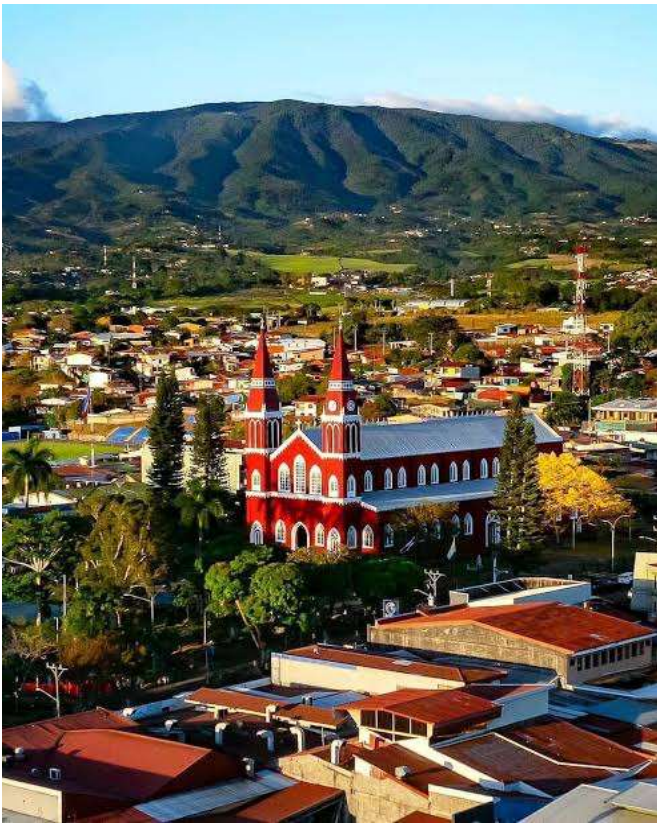
Outbound: March 2-9 (tentative)

We will be sharing this journey to Alajuela Costa Rica with Northeastern Ohio so spaces are limited. Leslie and Joan
Leslie and Joan are exploring interest in this journey.

Leslie (badainesL@aol.com)

Joan (jturbyville@comcast.net)

Photos of Alajuela, Costa Rica



International Festivals 2026

Knoxville provides many opportunities to explore other cultures. The Greenwoods participated in the European festival and a group attended the Greek festival as well. Some of us met for a delicious lunch at the Holy Land Market for delicious Mediterranean food.

Knoxville's cultural identity is deeply tied to its celebration of global heritage. Throughout the year, the Marble City transforms into a crossroads of world traditions, bringing authentic music, culinary arts, dance, and historical exhibits to public parks and downtown streets.

From the thunder of West African djembe drums to classical Italian opera pop-ups along Gay Street and pan-European craft markets in Market Square, the 2026 international festival lineup highlights contributions from African, Asian, European, and Latin American communities across East Tennessee.

Master 2026 International Festival Schedule

Festival	Date(s)	Region / Heritage	Location	Primary Highlights
Knox Shamrock Fest	Mid-March	Irish / Celtic	Gay Street & World's Fair Park	St. Patrick's parade, bagpipe corps, Celtic rock
Rossini Festival	April 18–19	Italian / European	Downtown / Gay Street	Classical opera stages, 700+ artists, street market
Smoky Mountain Scottish Games	May	Scottish / Celtic	Townsend, TN (Metro Area)	Highland athletics, pipe & drum corps, clan gatherings
Kuumba Festival	August 1–2	African & Diaspora	Market Square & Chilhowee Park	West African drumming, Junkanu parade, marketplace

Immaculate Conception Irish Fest	Mid-August	Irish Heritage	404 W. Vine Ave (Downtown)	Live folk bands, historic church tours, pub fare
First Europeans Festival	August 16	Pan-European	Market Square	Continental cuisine, folk dancing, artisan markets, crafts
GermanFest	Late August	Bavarian / German	First Lutheran Church (Broadway)	Dachshund races, oompah brass bands, beer gardens
Knox Asian Festival	August 29–30	Asian (Multi-Nation)	Convention Center & World's Fair Park	14 country pavilions, Asian street food, cultural parade
Knoxville Greek Fest	Late September	Greek / Mediterranean	St. George Greek Orthodox Church	Gyros, baklava, folk dance troupes, sanctuary tours
HoLa Festival	October 10–11	Latin American	World's Fair Park Performance Lawn	Live salsa & Latin jazz, country booths, artisan market

Planning Your Visit

- **Downtown Venues:** Events located along Gay Street, Market Square, and World's Fair Park are accessible via downtown parking garages (free on weekends) and city trolley lines.
- **Weather & Comfort:** Summer events like the Knox Asian Festival utilize indoor venues like the Knoxville Convention Center for performance stages while maintaining outdoor food markets.
- **Admission:** Most downtown street festivals offer free admission with pay-as-you-go food and artisan shopping, while regional heritage events like the Scottish Games use ticketed gate entry.



Immaculate Conception Church, Irish festival tour Asian festival, World's Fair Park



International festivals celebrate world's culture in Knoxville

2026 Upcoming Dates

Mark Your Calendar

Meeting Tuesday, September 22

Due to a scheduling conflict, we will be meeting in the first room to your left as you enter the building. This is the Lizzie Crozier French Room.

A presentation on the June 2026 trip to Spokane, WA. will be given by Bill Cherry and Janis and Bruce Robinson.

This is a bring your own lunch meeting with drinks and dessert provided.

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

October 13,2026, November 10,2026, December 8,2026

Upcoming Events

October 27,2026 Beck Cultural Exchange Center, Details are being planned and will be publicized as they develop.

December 8,2026 Holiday dinner at Holly's Gourmet Market. We are scheduled to have our Holiday Party in the evening with approximately the same menu as last year. The club will be covering the cost of the meal and a cash bar will be available. Please feel free to make suggestions to make this a fun event for everyone!

Notes / Member Information

If you are interested in attending the Board Meetings virtually (or in-person when they take place) please e-mail Bill Cherry. FFK Members can also request a copy of Board meeting minutes from Secretary, Phyllis Driver.

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

2026 Club Officers & Chairpersons

President	Open Position
VP / Acting President	Bill Cherry
Secretary	Phyllis Driver
Treasurer	Marsha Mitchell
Program Chairperson	Dave & Ellen Greenwood
Membership Chairperson	Bill Cherry
Journey Chairs	Joan Turbyville & Leslie Badaines
Communications Chairperson	Delora Cook
Club Concerns	Paulette Anderson
Historian	Karen Swander