



When I walk out of my house, I smile and think to myself, here it is – the long-wished-for and favorite season. Spring is the time when everything awakes and grows. The season where buds appear on trees and grass starts to grow after a winter slumber.



Nature becomes rejuvenated and gets ready for productive growth during upcoming warm months. I am sure that such a change in nature has effect on all the people. This year will be super exciting for our club.

March 1st is World Friendship Day

Friendship Force International was found on March 1st of 1977 by Wayne Smith with the encouragement and support of then-President Jimmy Carter who introduced the founding at a White House gathering of state governors. First Lady Rosalyn Carter served as Honorary Chairperson of Friendship Force until 2002. Every year Friendship Force International celebrates its establishment on that date as a celebration of "World Friendship Day".

Friendship Force of Raleigh Day

On February 18th, Mayor Mary Ann Baldwin proclaimed March 1st, Friendship Force of Raleigh Day. Thank you to Mike and the Mayor for arranging this honor.

Present were Mike Rakouskas, Doyle Long, Patricia Jones (our newest member who joined FF that day), Stephan and Molly Kiefer.



2020 JOURNEYS

FF RALEIGH TO FF FLORIDA SUNCOAST – February 20 – 25. Our club has just completed this journey. See article in this newsletter.

FF RALEIGH TO NZ AND AUSTRALIA – Our club, joined by ambassadors from other clubs, is preparing to embark on a three week journey, one week hosted by the Kapiti Coast, NZ, club and two weeks in Australia – one week each hosted by the North Moreton and Tweed Valley clubs. This journey will span from March into April.

FF MEMPHIS TO FF RALEIGH, September 14 - 19, 2020 - We are looking forward to having the Memphis Club join us for a five-day stay September 14 - 19, 2020. It's a great time of year for them to visit us and we're planning on a fun and informative Journey for them. We need Home Hosts, Day Hosts, and of course Hosts for Regional Dinners. See bottom of page 3.

**Friendship Force of Raleigh to Friendship Force Florida Suncoast
February 20 – 25, 2020, Journey
Summary by Judy Wright, Ambassador Coordinator**



On February 20 eleven members embarked on a five-day journey to Friendship Force Florida Suncoast. We were treated to a delightful array of activities and enjoyed mostly mild and sunny weather. We were fortunate to meet many Florida Suncoast members through day hosting, welcome and farewell parties, and two small group home-hosted dinners. Read on if you'd like to know more about this journey.

Fay Krapf and Bob Wells enjoyed a few days in South Florida before driving to their host's home in Indian Rocks Beach. The rest of us flew non-stop flight to Tampa and arrived mid-morning. We were welcomed at the airport by Florida Suncoast members holding their banner high. Judy Allen and Pat DeBoer were hosted in North Redington Beach, Carole Dubber and Molly Kiefer in St. Petersburg, Bob and Brenda Gay in Palm Harbor, Doyle Long and Marilyn Sorin at different homes in Clearwater, and Judy Wright in Largo. Pinellas County is only 38 miles long and 15 miles at its widest point, yet it has 24 incorporated municipalities. As you can see, we were scattered among these communities.

The first official activity on the itinerary was the Welcome Party, a delicious potluck, held at a Community Clubhouse where one member lives. At that time, we were "introduced" to the club by strolling/dancing under a canopy with our home hosts.



The following day (Friday) we visited Tarpon Springs, known as the "Sponge Capital of the World," where Greek heritage remains strong. We were met at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral by the caretaker of the cathedral, a very knowledgeable and articulate communicator, who not only described the ornate structure, with its Byzantine

architecture and intricate icons, but also educated us on the religion itself. We had many questions and he was able to answer them all. It was a great experience.

Several members braved the chilly wind that afternoon to experience a demonstration of the traditional way of diving for sponges. Our guide's family has been in the sponge business for generations, and he was able to describe the past and present. We bundled up in blankets to travel down the river where a diver donned the old-time dive suit and dropped into the cold water to show us how sponges were raked from the river floor.





Saturday, we met in Ybor City, a multi-ethnic neighborhood of Tampa, which was settled by immigrants primarily from Cuba, Spain and Italy who flocked to the thriving cigar industry. There they hand rolled hundreds of millions of cigars annually until the depression hit and the industry waned. We visited the Ybor City Museum State Park where a docent led us through a casita typical of the housing of the time and we studied the exhibits in the museum. We wrapped up our time in Ybor City with a delicious lunch at the Columbia Restaurant.

Saturday afternoon we visited the Tampa Bay History Center where we viewed exhibits of local history and watched a reenactment of Mary McLeod Bethune's life and legacy, part of the museum's Living History Series.

Sunday found us in St. Petersburg where we were immersed in the art of Salvadore Dali at the Dali Museum which features the largest collection of Dali's works outside of Europe. That afternoon we visited the Imagine Museum where we were amazed at the array of sparkling works of glass art. Our docent who provided brief explanations of the type/method of each work made the experience much more meaningful.



Back in St. Petersburg on Monday, we were even more amazed at the collection of glass art featured at the Duncan McClellan Glass Gallery. We were so fortunate that Mr. McClellan was available to share the history of the gallery, stories of the different artists and their work, and to explain the community outreach involved with the DMG School Project.

We said our goodbyes at the Farewell Party, a catered buffet at the Royal Palms Community. We enjoyed live music provided by a local duo that included sing-alongs and a little kicking-up-of-our-heels. All in all, it was a successful and fun journey.



Some of you had an opportunity to sign up as hosts for Incoming Memphis at our recent First Sunday at 5 gathering, but we want to hear from many more of you. If you didn't sign up, call or email Doyle Long (919-618-0208 or doylejlong0831@gmail.com) or Liz Smith (919 437-3611 or mary.elizabethsmith@icloud.com), Co-host Coordinators, to let them know how you might be able to help. We hope everyone will want to be involved in enjoying these wonderful friends from Memphis!! We look forward to hearing from you! Liz and Doyle

March First Sunday @ 5

Our "First Sunday @ 5:00" was a potluck dinner event at the home of Fay Krapf and Bob Wells.

We also celebrated the proclamation by Mayor Mary-Ann Baldwin on March 1st as "Friendship Force of Raleigh Day".

In addition, we also bid "Bon Voyage" to our delegation who will be making a Journey to Australia and New Zealand

later this month. Joining our members on this Journey will be Friendship Force members from Alabama, Connecticut, Virginia, Wisconsin, Washington and the Province of Ontario, Canada.



FRIENDSHIP FORCE INFORMATION SESSION HELD IN JANUARY

Friendship Force of Raleigh recently held an Information Session for New Members and those just wanting to learn more about our organization. Our meeting facility was provided by Waltonwood Lake Boone, and Mike Rakouskas and Molly Kiefer organized the event. Information about Friendship Force International, the structure of Friendship Force of Raleigh, what's important to know about home hosting and traveling with Friendship Force was covered. Those present were pleased with the depth of information provided. If you would like to attend a meeting like this in the future, please let Mike Rakouskas, our Membership Chair, know mrakouskas@aol.com.



Members are encouraged to join a committee:

Activities Committee— Liz Smith, chair

First Sunday Gatherings – Molly Kiefer, chair; Mike Rakouskas – communications

Member Concerns – Carol Winner

Membership Committee –Mike Rakouskas, chair; Jan Johnson, Carol Reilly, Judy Wright.

Newsletter— Olga Dvoric, editor; Judy Wright

Peace Pole – Mike Rakouskas, Brenda Gay – co-chairs; DeAnne Dotson

Publicity/Public Relations – Mike Rakouskas; Rachel Masimore

Telephone Committee – Carol Reilly, chair; Jan Johnson, Judy Allen

Website - Jorge Montoya

**THE FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF
RALEIGH 2020 MEMBERSHIP
APPLICATION**

<https://www.facebook.com/friendshipforceraleigh/>

Please circle one:

New

Renew

Today's
date: _____

A. INDIVIDUAL DATA

Last name _____ First name _____ M.I. _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Home phone (____) _____

Employer _____ Alt. phone (____) _____

Profession (or former prof.) _____ E-mail _____

B. SECOND ADULT - Family Membership

Last name _____ First name _____ M.I. _____

Employer _____ Alt. phone (____) _____

Profession (or former prof.) _____ E-mail _____

C. TALENTS OR INTERESTS YOU COULD SHARE WITH FRIENDSHIP FORCE

Foreign languages spoken _____

Countries visited or have knowledge _____

Talents and skills _____

Countries you would like to visit _____

D. MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR CALENDAR YEAR JAN. 1 TO DEC. 31

_____ \$50.00 Family membership renew /new (Two adults living in
same household with or without minor children)

_____ \$30.00 Individual membership renew / new

_____ \$10.00 Student membership renew / new

_____ **Total** Please make check payable to The Friendship Force of
Raleigh and mail to: The Friendship Force of Raleigh, P.O.
Box 21022, Raleigh, NC 27619

An Order Form Link for Name Badges can be found here: <https://thefriendshipforce.org/resources/>