



friendship force
SARASOTA



Friendship Force
International
Building Global Unity

FRIENDSHIP FORCE SRQ

Good morning. Thanks to all who renewed their membership. We are working on growing our membership and looking for ideas to get the word out. Please read the newsletters and email. We spend considerable time and energy to bring you updated information and it's frustrating to hear that members don't read their email.

- 1. Next club meeting (Tues, March 31 (our April meeting), Gulf Gate Library,** meeting starts at 6:00 pm.
Come early to socialize. Abe Lederman and Neal Schleifer will present our club journey to Australia and New Zealand. Our business meeting will follow the presentation, 7112 Curtiss Ave, Sarasota, FL 34231. Following our meeting, Neil Schleifer reserved **Pho 101 Noodle House**. It has vegetarian alternatives. 6125 S Tamiami Trl, Sarasota, <https://flpho.com> , just north of Clark Rd and Walgreens on the right (east side of 41).
- 2. The World Friendship Day International Potluck** was a huge success. See photos at the end. We had more than 50 attend. Thanks to Barb Delgato for hosting at her clubhouse. **Did anyone pick up a lightweight black jacket with a zipper and collar but no pockets.** It belongs to Abby Doronzio, one of our guests from the Suncoast club. Please bring it to next meeting or let Terri know.
- 3. Our final date for collecting 2026 dues is March 31.** Bring your check to the meeting for \$100 per person or pay online. Our treasurer, JoEllen Lane, will submit a one-time payment to FFI on April 1. After this date, dues and other FFI fees will be paid via the member portal. If you need help, please call Terri. The portal saves tremendous amount of manual labor for our club and FFI and is much more secure than mailed checks. https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/sign_in If you have trouble logging in or can't remember your password, call. We will have an **updated, printed directory list** at the next meeting for everyone.
- 4. We have 8 members attending the North American Conference in Memphis, TN April 24-26,** Thanks Abe L, Diane Schulman, Diana Friedman, JoEllen Lane, Gina Thomas, Kay Consigny, Judi Stratton and Terri H.
- 5. Marketing-**Abe Lederman, our membership chair, has arranged several interviews and events. If you have other clubs or organizations that would like to hear about FFI, please contact us.
 - Ian Swaby from **The Observer** interviewed Abe & Terri on Mon, March 23 and will write an article about the cultural journeys we experience. If you know an international member who was inbound to Sarasota, and you think they'd be willing to talk about their experience with Ian, please forward their name and Terri will contact them for their permission.
 - Janice Ivers of **Singles on the Go** invited FF SRQ to speak on *What is Friendship Force* on Sun, April 12 at 3:00 at Faith Presby Church on Beneva. Do you want to join Terri?
 - Terri, Peggy and Abe will be at **the Sarasota Farmers Market** on Sat, May 9 to represent FF Sarasota. Drop by and visit. Would you like to join us?
 - Terri and Abe will be interviewed **live** on **WSLR** by Tom Walker on Wed, May 13. We'll share info when confirmed on the live interview.

6. Journeys 2026-Judi Stratton, Journeys Coordinator

- a. **Outbound February 2026 to 26277 FF Alajuela, Costa Rica.** This club was on our requested 2026 destinations. Abe Lederman was Ambassador Coordinator and did a fantastic job of coordinating this trip. We'll be posting a photo journal from the 14 ambassadors who had a wonderful week on the journey and the post trip. See a couple fun photos at the end of the newsletter.
- b. **Outbound October 4-11, 2026.** Ft Worth (rescheduled from Helene and Milton in 2024). Debbie Kuhns, Ambassador Coordinator. Sign up sheet will be at back table.
- c. **Inbound Nov 2-8, 2026 26094 Banjarmasin, Indonesia.** Our club visited Banjarmasin in 2019. Diana Friedman and Terri Holsinger are Host Coordinators. We do not have confirmation yet. Visa costs and difficulty in applying for them plus lack of interest are problems they are facing. We've sent a description and sample itinerary. If this inbound falls through, we have several domestic clubs interested in coming to Sarasota.
- d. **To see journeys from around the world, you must login to FFI Member Portal.** https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/sign_in Additionally, there are many independent journeys where you're invited by an individual to visit their city/country: NZ, Brazil, CT, MI, Tanzania, OH, TX, CAN, Quebec, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Mexico. For all journeys, you must be a member of any club and/or FFI, have travel insurance and sign a mobility waiver.
- e. We've submitted our **2027 inbound request** form. This form indicates how many weeks we are willing to host and what months. We submitted 2 inbounds in non-hurricane months.
- f. We've submitted our **2027 outbound request** form. This form indicates how many outbound journeys we are requesting and what countries/club we want to visit. We submitted **Switzerland, Hungary and Austria.**

7. **Welcome to our newest member, Judi Kozzi.** You may have met her at the Friendship Day International potluck. She is interested in volunteering for membership, social comm and day hosting. She was a Jersey girl until 2010 when she & her husband became snowbirds. She is now fulltime SRQ resident. Judy ushers at FST and at the Whimsey (Reeta introduced her to FF). She enjoys exploring local and statewide attractions. Her address and email are in the updated directory.



8. Upcoming events

- a. Fri, March 27, 1, FF Film Talk, Burns Ct
- b. Mon, April 20, 10:00 am International Book Club, New College
- c. Fri, April 24, 1-ish, FF Film Talk, Burns Ct
- d. **Tues, May 5** Monthly meeting at Gulf Gate Library, Room B, A representative of Senior Friendship Centers (Lindsey Schroeder or Mike Stephens) will present on the services of their organization
- e. Sat, May 16, 4-6 pm. Sarasota Cuban Ballet, Flavors of Dance: Bachata, Merengue, and Salsa, Dance Class and other fun activities! [Tickets Here](#) Latin Dance Class taught by Sarasota Cuban Ballet Alums Francois Llorente and Camila Serrano. Sarasota Cuban Ballet Auditorium, 4740 Cattlemen Road Sarasota FL 34233 "Fun" Raising event to benefit The Sarasota Cuban Ballet
- f. Mon, May 18, 10:00 am International Book Club, New College
- g. Fri, May 29, 1-ish, FF Film Talk, Burns Ct
- h. Fri, May 29, 5:30 pm. All wine group members, friends and subs join us for a potluck dinner. More info is coming.
- i. **Tues, June 2**, Gulf Gate Library, Room B, Monthly meeting.

- j. **No meetings in July or August. We may schedule some summer fun time.**
- k. **Wed, Sept 2, Monthly meeting.** We'll be back at the brand new Fruitville Library.

9. From Jeremi Snook, CEO, Friendship Force International. In moments of global uncertainty, the mission of Friendship Force becomes even more important. Our organization was founded on the belief that **lasting peace begins with personal connection** — that when individuals share their homes, stories and daily lives across cultures, uncertainty and misconceptions are replaced by understanding and differences become opportunities for learning. While world events may shift around us, our commitment to building global unity through friendship remains constant. We will continue to monitor developments carefully and communicate openly and promptly should any updates affect our programs. Thank you for your continued dedication to global friendship and mutual understanding.

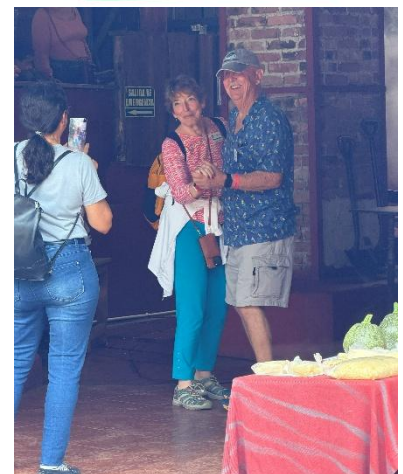
10. Join fellow members from around the world for an unforgettable Festival at Sea as we explore one of the most remote and biologically rich regions on Earth — the breathtaking Great Bear Rainforest. This exclusive **7-day Friendship Force cruise sails roundtrip from Seattle, USA, to Ketchikan, Alaska,** offering dramatic coastal scenery, incredible wildlife viewing, and meaningful connections with your global Friendship Force community. Festival at Sea: The Great Bear Rainforest, **Journey #: 26434** (MyFF)

- a. Dates: 4–11 October 2026
- b. Departure: Roundtrip from Seattle, USA
- c. Spots Available: 80
- d. Costs: Cabins start at \$1,084 per person plus additional \$225 FFI program fee. Oceanview, verandah, and suite options are available.
- e. [For full details and to reserve your spot, please click here.](#)



11. Abe has set up an account with Direct Embroidery for club shirts. We will have a fashion show at the next meeting. These are approximately \$28 plus tax. 1205 Beneva Rd.

Costa Rica February photos, at a pineapple plantation and at the Poas Volcano. We had a great time, delicious food and loved the dancing. We wore ourselves out at the farewell.





March 4, International Dinner From Cuba to Korea to Italy, we had a huge selection of foods. FF Suncoast (Clearwater/St Pete club) joined us.





<https://www.facebook.com/FFSRQ>
<https://ffsarasotafl.org/>



2026 Friendship Force Sarasota Officers

President – Terri Holsinger

Meeting Hosts and Greeters volunteer each month

Program Committee

Chair - Diana Friedman

Reeta Dean, Peggy Hayden, Sara Jones, JoEllen Lane, Gina Thomas

Secretary - Marie Beck

Treasurer- JoEllen Lane

Past Presidents -Terri Holsinger, Kay Consigny

STANDING COMMITTEES

Database-Margaret Lewis

Club Journeys Coordinator-Judi Stratton

Membership-Abe Lederman

Communications/Media-Terri Holsinger

FB, Newsletter, Website, Email

Wine Tasting Groups

Debbie & Gary Kuhns Group 1, Marie Beck Group 3

Book Club-Reeta Dean

Film Talk-Dorothy Flynn

Social Committee: Kay Consigny