



friendship force  
MINNESOTA-TWIN CITIES



## DAGMAR RUNYON RECEIVES THE DON WOLTER AWARD



At the annual Holiday Party, Marge Runnakko presented Dagmar Runyon with a certificate proclaiming her as the 2017 Don Wolter Award recipient. Dagmar Runyon was chosen from a field of several nominees by a committee comprised of Val Hessburg, Barb Emer, Cindy Cauble and Marge Runnakko.

The first award was made in 2014 in remembrance of Don Wolter who always went the extra mile for the club with his many contributions including the publication of the newsletter for 20 years.

Dagmar's nominator noted that Dagmar served as Secretary and Treasurer and single handedly made sure that many rich monthly activities were planned yearly for club members. She faithfully demonstrated attributes described as "Can Do", Positive, Flexible and going the Extra Mile, and always Promoted the Friendship Force Mission – all noted in the nominating criteria. An example of Dagmar's flexibility is that although she was already hosting two guests; Dagmar gave up her own bed and slept on her sofa when the Hosting Committee was short a space for an ambassador. Dagmar could be counted on for involvement in creating programs and representing our club as a warm welcoming ambassador. Congratulations, Dagmar!

*By Marge Runnakko*



**NEW MEMBERS:** John Verby

Terese Libby

Rose Emerick

**RETURNING MEMBER** Beverly Sealy



# WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

By Rita Mays

As we embrace a new year, we tend to reflect on the past, sometimes letting go of what has been and making resolutions to change. The New Year brings an opportunity for transitions.

So it is with our Friendship Force club of Minnesota-Twin Cities. On page five we honor the Super Heroes who have contributed so greatly to our club in 2017. On page six we list the new 2018 board stepping into leadership. Together we will continue the passion and vitality that has kept our club together for 40 years, as we embrace transitions to the future.

Forty years – WOW! The early adapters of 1978 Friendship Force had a vision for the world – to build friendships and promote peace. With the Berlin wall and Cold War, (see story page seven), it must have seemed critical to pursue this dream. To those who had just experienced the Viet Nam war and people demanding a better world, Friendship Force sparked a passion that each person could personally embrace.

Our history is important. Throughout 2018 we will honor our early members and their stories in our newsletter and at club activities. Plan to join us in September for a special 40-year celebration of our club! Watch for more details to come!

Now, 40 years later, it is critical that we are still ambassadors for friendship and peace, both internationally and domestically. Our positive energy, behaviors and beliefs can still be a strong force to change the world. We can continue to build friendships and peace, both within our club and around the world. We can build a better future because we are the Force in Friendship Force and this is ours to do in 2018.

To contact a board member, go to our club’s website at [friendshipforcetwincities.org](http://friendshipforcetwincities.org) and click on board members/contacts in the red bar at the top. Click on the individual you would like to contact. Or, check the roster for email addresses.

## BOARD MEMBERS

**President:** Rita Mays

**Vice-President:** Jane Bardon

**Treasurer:** Buck MacDonald

**Secretary:** Tom Scott

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### Activities

Jane Norman and John Christensen

### **Historian**

Jan Lanyk

### **Journey Coordinator**

Mary Cunningham

### **Member at Large**

Ben Szyplinski

### **Membership**

### **Newsletter Editor**

Barb Emer

### **Webmaster:**

### **Ambassador Coordinators**

Gene Selchow and Rosie Foreman outgoing to West Alajuela

### **Host Coordinators:**

Cindy Cauble and Jane Bardon incoming from Rostov-on-Don, Russia

**DEADLINE FOR THE  
MARCH/APRIL ISSUE  
IS FEBRUARY 15TH**

## MEET YOUR OFFICERS FOR 2018



Rita Mays

Buck MacDonald

Jane Bardon (Not pictured Tom Scott)



### 2018 MEMBERSHIP DUES

*Thank you to everyone who has paid your 2018 FFI and FFMNTC Membership dues. We look forward to your friendship and participation in the coming year.*

There has been a change: **Annual dues for 2018 are \$35 per member as approved by our Club's Board of Directors. The deadline for 2018 dues is January 1, 2018.**

Friendship Force International has moved to a dues structure that equalizes dues for everyone. The \$35 dues payment is divided into two parts: \$15 goes directly to FFI and \$20 stays with our Club. We use the \$20 to keep in touch with our local members through mailings and our website; for overhead on our quarterly, semi-annual and annual meetings and special gatherings; for outreach to the community and future members; and for general administrative costs. When funds allow, we sponsor members to attend FFI conferences to learn from other clubs around the world. We hope that you will continue your membership in 2018 and be part of our Friendship Force Club. We all count, whether we venture on Journeys to faraway places, host ambassadors, plan events, help inform our members or the community about our mission, serve on the Board of Directors, or just enjoy getting together to share stories of our adventures seeing the world. A Membership Application is attached with this newsletter. Please fill it out and send it with your dues payment(s) to:

Buck MacDonald  
P.O. Box 24294  
Edina MN 55424

If you have questions about your membership status, contact:  
Treasurer Buck MacDonald at [jbmcd11@hotmail.com](mailto:jbmcd11@hotmail.com) (763-473-1721)  
or V.P. Jane Bardon at [janebardon@yahoo.com](mailto:janebardon@yahoo.com) (651-484-7989)

*Annual holiday gala combines business with pleasure. A time to gather as we bid farewell to 2017.*

Mary Cunningham

Rita Mays



Hosts Extraordinaire Gordy & Mary Elscott



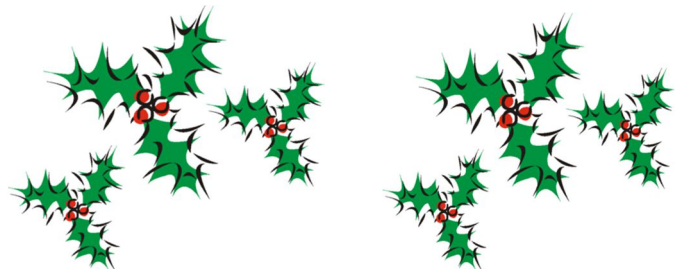
Greg McAndrews



Jean Eagan

Marie

and Gene Selchow



*Super Heroes of 2017*

Friendship Force of Minnesota – Twin Cities has a long list of members that can be called Super Heroes. They are champions. They are brave men and women that boldly do what is needed to keep our organization alive, vibrant and growing. They have passion for the mission of Friendship Force and that passion drives them to bigger and better things.

In particular, Board members are the Super Heroes that have kept things working this past year. As president in 2017, I wish to thank all Board members for their dedication and service during the year.

At this time, I want to say a special thank you to the Super Hero Board members that have decided to step down at the end of 2017. Some have taken on new roles within the leadership of our club in order to challenge themselves. Others will focus on other personal interests, but promise to stay active in our club. They leave space for new or long-term members to step in and share even more new ideas. A sincere thank you for your dedication and service! *Rita Mays, President*

Ken Scherber has been our club Treasurer since 2009. Besides reporting our finances monthly, he has managed our investments wisely. He also handled business with FFI, Exchange and Journey fees, membership dues, and reimbursing members for expenditures. Beyond that, he has faithfully attended Board meetings, offering prudent comments and ideas, and jumped in to help with committees and activities!

Barb Emer has been our Exchange Coordinator, now called Journey Coordinator for six years. In this Super Hero role, she coached Exchange Directors, now called Ambassador or Host Coordinators, for two or more International Exchanges or Journeys per year, and even more in years when there were also Domestic Exchanges. Besides setting a high standard of excellence, she trained home hosts, participated in events, and hosted many ambassadors herself. She is a Champion of Friendship Force, and has positively impacted many, many in the effort to promote global friendships. In 2015 Barb was awarded the FF MN TC Don Wolter Service Award for her many contributions to our club.

Louise Anderson is stepping down from the Board as 2017 Past President, having led us in 2015-2016, as President and as Vice President in 2013 and 2014..Many new members were recruited to the club and then on to the Board during this time. Louise guided us in strategic planning and developing a policy and procedure manual and position descriptions. In 2017, she was the Super Hero behind the scene to keep us on track.

Anne Shea, stepped into the role of Secretary in 2016 as a new member. She has been Super Strong in recruiting new members, volunteering for committees to get the work done, and especially helpful planning events. Last summer she represented FF MN TC at the Friendship Force World Conference in Manchester, England, and brought back new ideas and suggestions from the workshops she attended.

Greg McAndrews has been our Super Hero Membership Chair. As a retiree-transplant from the Milwaukee FF club, he brought new ideas to our Board. He worked endlessly to set up a new, more detailed membership directory and roster to capture information gathered from club surveys. This information will help us plan activities and hosting events next year. His Super Hero passion for recruiting and communicating with new members has been a great asset to our club.

Cindy Cauble, Super Activities Chair, worked on our club's social team for a couple of years, before taking on the challenge to lead this committee in 2017. Her outstanding work on the club picnic and annual meeting helped create strong attendance and promote connections for our club members. Cindy challenged the Board to try Punchbowl as a new way to promote the holiday party, and send announcements to members. Now she is taking on a new role as Host Coordinator and is the main contact for the Rostov-on-Don, Russia Incoming Journey in 2018.

Marge Runnako, Super Webmaster, has been our Webmaster for the past three years. She jumped right in to learn about our club, keep our activities and contacts updated, and advise us on the growing world of cyber connections. Marge and Sam began traveling with the club to Australia and New Zealand, and in

2017 she became Ambassador Coordinator for our Journey to Lethbridge. Marge has been a key player on many activities and committees, most recently leading the Don Wolter Service Award Committee.

Vicki Palmer, has demonstrated Super Hero passion and compassion in working on special events. In 2016, she was a key player in the special holiday party. In 2017, she took on the initial leadership role to jump-start our Fortieth Anniversary Celebration party. As a Board member, she represented us at the 2017 FFI World Conference in Manchester, and already helped us to start thinking about the Midwest Regional Conference that our Minnesota Club will host in 2020.

## **2018 LEADERS**

President	Rita May
Vice-President	Jane Bardon
Treasurer	Buck MacDonald
Secretary	Tom Scott
Activities	Jane Norman and John Christensen
Jan Lanyk	Historian
Journey Coordinator	Mary Cunningham
Member-at-Large	Ben Szyplinski
Newsletter Editor:	Barb Emer
Sunshine	Val Hessburg
Outgoing Journey:	W. Alajuela, Costa Rica Rosie Foreman and Gene Selchow, Ambassa- dor Coordinators
Incoming Journey	Rostov-on-Don, Russia Cindy Cauble and Jane Bardon, Ambassa- dor Coordinators



**HAVE FUN!**  
**GET INVOLVED!!**  
**VOLUNTEER!!!**

- Membership and roster data base
- Webmaster
- Public relations and media planning
- Activities – help with member meetings
- Additional historians and reporters to review club's history file and interview members for 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary
- Fortieth anniversary – plan celebrations
- Newsletter reporters and photographers
- **Contact Rita Mays for further information.**

### **Save the Date**

#### **PRESENTATION ON CUBA BY JANE NORMAN**

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 5-8:pm  
Edina Library  
Further Info in next newsletter

### **INCOMING JOURNEY FROM RUSSIA**

We will host the Rostov-on-Don club of Russia and possibly the Ulan Ude club, also of Russia. They will first spend a week in Omaha before arriving in the Twin Cities May 6<sup>th</sup>, and departing May 12<sup>th</sup>. It could be a large group dependent on the visa process. Jane Bardon and Cindy Cauble are Co-host Coordinators.

If you would like to be on the planning committee for this exciting event, contact Cindy or Jane. The first meeting will be the last week of January. Also, if you know of anyone who is familiar with the Russian language, please let us know. Jane: [janebardon@yahoo.com](mailto:janebardon@yahoo.com); Cindy: [cindyc219@msn.com](mailto:cindyc219@msn.com).

*Cindy Cauble*

### **Save the Date**

**Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup> – 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

*A time to reminisce, laugh and catch  
up with old friends and make new ones*

Berlin Friendship Force Trip out of Minnesota. It was truly impressive that Minnesota Friendship Force was able to pull off their trip to Berlin. In the spring of 1978, Friendship Force International filed for bankruptcy. The dedicated FF Club of Minnesota was not deterred and continued on with their task of finding 250 people to take their maiden trip to Berlin for 9 days. They gathered a group of people from Minnesota and surrounding states to make the trip.

The group of FF travelers believed that FF was a worthwhile program that would create better understanding in the world between people. They took a pre-trip survey on their expectations and when they returned, took another survey. The differences of attitude were noted and people who went on the trip definitely improved their beliefs about the culture and people of Berlin, Germany thus proving that FF would change the world through Friendship.

At this time the Berlin Wall was still standing. This group of visitors endured several cultural shock situations when they crossed over to East Berlin. As some of you may remember, the Wall wound its way through Berlin splitting buildings, families, friends and placed the city at odds politically and economically.

The wall was built of solid concrete. It was 15 feet tall with a barrel top to keep people from escaping by vaulting over it. Visitors to the Wall would stand on wooden platforms to view Eastern Berlin. The East German side was formidable. In order to deter escape from East Berlin, the Germans dusted the area with sand each day and would examine for tracks of would be escapees. Dogs patrolled the area and guards would sit in towers ready to shoot to kill. Also included were barbed wire and electric charged wire fences along with buried landmines. Small crosses marked the spots where people died trying to escape.

Communists encouraged visitors from West Berlin at a cost of \$15.00 per person for a half-day bus tour. This tour only showed new buildings and restored historic sites. The tour guides were providing propaganda for East Berlin. During the tour, guides stated there was no reason for anyone to want to escape this "perfect paradise". With no unemployment, free schools and medical services along with low rents, who would want to leave? Your passports were checked at least 4 times during the tour.

Contrasting East and West Berlin at this time: the West Berlin area was clean and modern filled with color and people were able to move around freely. While East Berlin was grim; with many of the buildings being facades to impress visitors. During the tour the visitors were able to glimpse side streets that revealed bombed out areas from WWII still in existence. Very few people milled about in East Berlin.

Visitors were not allowed to take pictures for fear their cameras would be confiscated. No newspapers were allowed from West to East and no East Berlin money was taken out of the country. Vehicles were searched for stowaways.

The response of the FF travelers showed that wonderful friendships were forged during this visit. They came back with good memories of the people in West Berlin and a conclusion that Friendship Force did promote friendship and Universal Freedom.

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**Editor's Note:** **Members:** We welcome your stories, memories and anecdotes for the newsletter as part of an on-going series commemorating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We know you have wonderful stories to tell. We've heard *some* of them...

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**NOTE: Editor was not able to attach membership form. It can be obtained from our website.**

