



2022 SPRING
NEWSLETTER

Step up for 2022!

by Tom Scott, FFMNTC President

Welcome to 2022 and the Omicron, the latter of which will hopefully soon be in our rear-view mirror. While we need to be cautious, especially during this surge, we cannot be defined by Covid in the months and years to come as it hopefully joins the ranks of manageable endemic maladies. To that end, 2022 will be a combination of continuing virtual activities such as Travel-Tuesdays and the Spanish conversation group, as well as the monthly hikes, July picnic, Great Decisions group (new this year), and most importantly incoming and outgoing journeys which are essential to our Club's existence. So, read the newsletters and watch for the emails and mailings announcing upcoming events. Then sign up to attend an event, to home host or otherwise volunteer for our incoming Los Angeles journey in late May, or offer an idea for a new activity program. **We need folks to step up, get engaged and have some fun!**

*Peace and friendship,
Tom*

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NOTE: We've made a shift to better align our Club Newsletter issues to the seasons. "Spring" will now be the February, March, April issue, and "Summer" will be the May, June, July issue etc.

Club Programs and Contacts for 2022

Spanish Conversation Group

This group meets weekly by Zoom for an hour to practice speaking Spanish and to translate and read short stories. Our Spanish skill levels range from beginner to intermediate Mondays, 7:00 to 8:00 PM. **For more details and the Zoom link, contact Rita Mays at ritamnffi@yahoo.com or 612-730-5129**

Organized Group Hikes

The Club's hardy hiking group gets out there all winter! For more information or to get on the list: **Contact Jane Norman at janeaway7@aol.com or 612-206-7055.**

Travel-Tuesdays

Our travel presentations on the last Tuesday of the month will resume when we recruit new speakers for 2022. If you have a travel story to tell or a video that would interest Club members, let us know! **Contact Tom Scott, by text or phone at 612-804-4102 or email at tscott1909@gmail.com.**

Club Introduces “Great Decisions” Program

by Tom Scott, Club President

Our Club will be hosting a Great Decisions discussion group. Great Decisions is sponsored by the Foreign Policy Association, and is America’s largest discussion program on world affairs. The program consists of eight topics to be discussed at eight meetings during 2022. There is a briefing-book (cost \$30) with material on each topic. A 20 to 30-minute video will be shown at each meeting, followed by a discussion. The topics are: Changing Demographics, Outer Space, Climate Change, Russia, Myanmar and ASEAN, The Quad Alliance, Industrial Policy, and (U.S.) Drug Policy in Latin America. Go to the Foreign Policy Association web site at www.fpa.org and click on Great Decisions on the top menu bar for extensive details about the program.

This is intended to be an in-person event. The meetings will be held monthly starting in February, except for July, August and December. **The first meeting will be Monday, February 28 at 6:30 PM** at the home of Tom and Janet Scott, 1909 Fairmount Ave, St. Paul MN 55105. We will start out with some light desert, beverages and social time, followed by the video and discussion.

If Covid makes an in-person meeting problematic, we will switch to zoom for the initial February meeting and go from there. In accordance with Club policy all attendees will need to be fully vaccinated including booster. Bring a mask to wear indoors, if you wish.

Don’t be intimidated. Obviously, none of us are experts. Join in the discussion to the extent that you are comfortable. You will not be called on or quizzed. Please contact Tom Scott by text or phone at 612-804-4102 or email tscott1909@gmail.com if you would like to be part of the group. Even if you cannot make the first meeting, let me know, and we will add you to the list for subsequent meetings. I will order briefing books once I know how many participants we have. Peace, Tom

2022 Journey Updates

REMINDER: Outbound Journey to Germany and Turkey, Sept 25 - Oct. 9, 2022.

If you are interested in this Journey, contact Journey Coordinator, Tom Scott, by text or phone at 612-804-4102 or email at tscott1909@gmail.com. This Journey is limited to 12 ambassadors, so get your name on the interested list now.

JOURNEY STATUS: The Inbound LA arrival date is set for Saturday May 14. The LA/MN planning group agreed to a 60-day advance deadline for deciding whether to proceed with the journey.

2021 Don Wolter Service Award Goes to the Bardons

Friendship Force of Minnesota Twin Cities named Jane and Jack Bardon as the 2021 Don Wolter Award recipients for their service and support of our Club and our mission. The award was presented virtually on Zoom at the December 9, 2021 Annual Meeting.

Jane and Jack Bardon exemplify the spirit of the Don Wolter Award in many ways:

Jane and Jack maintain and promote an international worldview gained through their travel to some 120 countries. One thing has led to another Their experience teaching English in schools in two cities in Russia through Friendship Force, led to their service in the Peace Corps in Central Asia. In 2017, their experience in Central Asia led them to become involved in the Club’s OpenWorld program with delegates from Central Asia (Tajikistan) and the Open World – Ukraine programs that followed.

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Through the years, Jane held important leadership roles on the FFMNTC Board including Communications Chair, Webmaster, Membership Chair, and Newsletter Editor. In 2018, as VP, Jane helped lead and promote the Club's 40th Anniversary Celebration. As Club president in 2019 and 2020, she led us through COVID-19 challenges, including changing Board and Membership Meetings to Zoom and directing the virtual Officer Elections in 2020 and 2021.

They tell their story best...

Our Friendship Force Story

by Jane and Jack Bardon



CHILI – 2015

Club Membership

We first heard about Friendship Force from friend and Club member, Werner Tismer, who was the principal of our kids' elementary school. We joined the Club in 1999, 44 years after we were married, and just 4 years after we both retired from the University of Minnesota.

Although we had already travelled to every continent, we learned much from Friendship Force that helped us become better world citizens. Our Friendship Force experiences include Journeys to Brazil, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, Siberia, and Uganda, and hosting Ambassadors from Australia and Russia.

Our travels have taken us to about 120 countries with some repeats. India was always high on the list – we got there seven times. We travelled by train and car, with backpacks in Europe, went on group tours and Friendship Force Journeys, hired our own drivers and guides, worked and volunteered in Africa and Asia, and sailed to both ends of the earth on a retired Russian research/ice-breaker vessel.

We have met many people and experienced different cultures, foods, languages, and religions. We've been in deserts, forests, savannas, jungles, and mountains, and on water, ice and glaciers. Since we are both photographers, we've shared our stories of the world with many others. From 2003 to 2013 we both wrote multiple articles about our travels for the Club's newsletter, "The Ambassador."

Peace Corps Service

Jack was recruited to do psychiatric evaluations of potential Peace Corps Volunteers in the early sixties, shortly after the agency was formed. We were intrigued by Peace Corps service, but growing a family at the time. Fifty years later, in 2003, Jack came home one day and said: "Let's join the Peace Corps." I (Jane) thought he was out of his mind. We applied and were accepted with a flattering degree of enthusiasm. We were posted to Turkmenistan, one of the states in Central Asia formerly controlled by Russia.

We lived with a family, spoke Turkmen and used Russian in our work teaching public health. That meant four different alphabets as well as three languages which led to our major project of compiling a three-language medical dictionary.



TURKMENISTAN – 2004

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We are grateful for the Club's donation to publishing our three-language medical dictionary. We gave it away free to medical professionals throughout the country. Overall, Peace Corps was a challenging, rewarding, amazing, and one-of-a-kind experience.

Open World 2017, 2018, 2019

The Open World program is a real winner for both of us. It is the closest thing to Peace Corps that we have experienced. Jane served on the planning committee for the Tajikistan ladies and the two Ukraine groups. Jack helped with the program for the medical delegates from Ukraine. We both delighted in hosting a farewell potluck at our home for each of the groups with delegates, home-hosts, other Club members and a few returned Peace Corps Volunteers.



OPEN WORLD UKRAINIAN DELEGATES AND CLUB MEMBERS AT FAREWELL DINNER AT BARDONS

Volunteering for FFMNTC

I (Jane) have always been interested in nonprofits and their boards. Years ago, I wrote "public relations" in the interest blank on the FFMNTC member form; nothing happened. Then, at a Club event the president came and asked Jack about public relations. We got that straightened out and other jobs followed. I had experience in writing, graphic design, and computer technology, as well as non-profit governance, so there was a lot to do. This included member communications, the website and newsletter, the member database, revising and applying the bylaws, annual registration with the MN SOS, reinstating the Club's non-profit status with the IRS, exemption from MN sales tax (denied).

I want to thank the Club for trusting me with documents, processes, and information that are essential to the Club's nonprofit status and its continued success in carrying out its mission.

Don Wolter Service Award Background

Every year since 2014, FFMNTC MNTC has given the Don Wolter award to a member demonstrating outstanding service and support of our Friendship Force mission and philosophy. Don Wolter was our newsletter editor for almost twenty years. Faithfully, he published a newsletter deserving of awards until his death in 2013. We honor Don and his dedication to service through this annual award.

The key attributes of recipients of this award include leadership, interest in other cultures, positive and enthusiastic attitudes, flexibility, and going the extra mile. They support the mission of Friendship Force to promote global understanding across the barriers that separate people, recognizing that each individual can contribute to global goodwill.

Previous award recipients include: Mary Cunningham, Jane Norman, Joyce Sharp, Mary and Gordon Elscott, Louise Anderson, Barb Emer, Donna Leak, Dagmar Runyon, and Willis Unke.

"Today is the Best Day Yet" – Jim and Maribeth's Love Story

by Rita Mays, Board Director

This is a two-part story. Jim tells the first part, his love story, better than anyone, because it's from his heart! The second part captures the story of his leadership in our FFMNTC Club! Authored by Jim Collins, Maribeth Raullerson and Rita Mays, FFMNTC Board member.

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Part I – 2017-2021 Jim Collins and Maribeth Raullerson - Collins

Written by Jim Collins

Maribeth and I were going to marry 58 years ago but split because of a misunderstanding caused by a lack of communication. We went our separate ways. During this time Maribeth lost two husbands, and I lost my wife, Juanita, in 2009 after she suffered from Alzheimer's for many years. Maribeth and I got back together four years ago because my little sister, Sheila kept asking, "What happened to Maribeth?" Neither Maribeth nor I ever dated after losing our spouses and certainly never dreamed that we would ever get together with someone, much less each other.

I finally found Maribeth on the computer, after finding her married name that she was using on Facebook. I sent her a message on Halloween four years ago. She recognized my name and picture, so she responded warily, "Is this a trick or a treat?" To which I replied, "It's not a trick, but you get to decide if it's a treat."

It turned out that she lived near my oldest daughter who lives on Bainbridge Island, WA. I always go out to Washington for Christmas, so after talking on the phone for 7 weeks, from Halloween until Christmas, Maribeth picked me up at the airport Dec. 22, 2017. Life has been an adventurous love story since then.

Back in high school, Maribeth's Aunt Margaret introduced us in 1960. Aunt Margaret was the head waitress at the Crossroads Cafe in Eau Claire, WI, where I was working. She noticed that Maribeth had her eye on me and said to Maribeth "Not him, don't even think about it." What better recommendation could a guy get?

We were friends for a long time before we started dating. After high school, Maribeth worked full time and went to the University of Wisconsin in our hometown, Eau Claire, while I went to Loras College in Dubuque, IA on a basketball scholarship, until an auto accident ended my sports career.

Maribeth was a special education teacher in Golden Valley, Chicago, and West Palm Beach for 47 years. I was a hospital administrator by trade and ran a consulting business focused on the hospital's relationship with its physicians and employees. Our client hospitals were primarily located in Minnesota and Maryland.

Maribeth has two adult boys and I have two adult daughters. After their initial and funny reaction to us getting together, they are fully supportive. As one of her sons said to Maribeth "Wow, slow down Mom" to which she said "I am 74 years old, I don't have time to slow down and I've known Jim and his whole family since I was a teenager".

I know our story is a bit of a fairy tale but we are thrilled, surprised and deeply in love. These days we like to travel, spending spring and fall in Minnesota, summer in Washington and winter in Merida, Mexico, the oldest city in the America's, located in the warm and lovely Yucatan peninsula.



**COLLINS' FAVORITE RESTAURANT "LA CUBANITA
IN MERIDA, YUCATAN, MEXICO.**

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Part 2 Jim's Friendship Force Leadership Days

Written by Rita Mays

While Jim and Maribeth are now both members of our Minnesota FF Club, Jim has a long history of participation and leadership going back to the mid 1990's. His first wife, Juanita, worked at the State Senate with JC Bosse, who invited the Collins to get involved with our Club. They hosted a couple of ambassadors from New Zealand, and really enjoyed meeting new people from other countries. They also visited the ambassadors in New Zealand a few years after hosting them in the Twin Cities.

Juanita passed away in February of 2009 after a long battle with Alzheimer's. In 2010, Jim stepped forward as the Exchange Director (ED) for our Club's exchange to Indonesia. Along the way, Mary and Bill Cunningham, who had traveled frequently to Indonesia for Bill's work, coached Jim and directed him to their friend, Made, to serve as their local guide. At the time Made was a struggling artist, but now is internationally recognized for his traditional Balinese art. Jim also worked with Arifin Mochtar who at the time was serving on the Board of Directors for FFI. Jim, and now Maribeth, have maintained connections and friendships with both Arifin and Made and their wives for more than 10 years.

This Indonesian Exchange, which was featured on Travel-Tuesday, November 30, 2021, tested all the travelers, and especially their ED Jim, who exemplified "thinking on the fly" skills. As the Ambassadors were coming into Java, there was both a major volcanic eruption of Mount Merapi in Central Java, which disrupted all travel, and a 7.7 magnitude earthquake near the Mentawai Islands, resulting in a tsunami that destroyed coastal towns and killed several hundred people. All this while Ambassadors were trying to make their way from the airport to their home stay in the mountains of central Java.

After demonstrating profound leadership skills, and bringing all the travelers safely home, Jim was elected as our Club vice president in 2011 and 2012, serving with president Blaine McCutchan. In 2013 and 2014 he served as our Club president. Louise Anderson was recruited as vice president in 2014, and then she became FFMNTC president in 2015 and 2016.

Our gratitude to Jim Collins for his contributions to our Club over the past twenty-five years, and to both Jim and Maribeth for staying active and enthusiastic today! Rita Mays

REMEMBERING



Emery Vernon Erickson

September 21, 1926 – January 2, 2022

Golden Valley MN

Emery was born in Thief River Falls, Mn on September 21, 1926 - died suddenly on January 2, 2022 at age 95. Preceded in death by his parents, Frank & Hulda, and first wife Mary Jean. Survived by wife Ruby, sister Marilyn, daughters Janice Miller and Nanci (Jeff) Shapiro. Grandchildren Noah (Jennifer Saunders) Miller, Carissa Miller, Beth (Scott Boscapomi) Shapiro and Dan (Nicole) Shapiro, by great grandchildren Emily and Anna Shapiro, Solomon and Benjamin Boscapomi. Emery served in the Navy during WWII and was a graduate of the University of Minnesota. He worked in finance for 32 years.

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EMERY ERICKSON REMEMBRANCE

Over his lifetime he found great joy in volunteering at many organizations including the Jaycees, Big Brothers, Jr Achievement, Aquatennial, Goodwill, Special Olympics, Little League, International Friendship Force, Helping Paws, and the National Ski Patrol, among others. For a time, Emery raised honeybees and went to his grandkids schools to teach them about their importance. He was also a master woodworker, creating many useful items big and small, as well as building their home in Edina and cabin in Wisconsin. However, his greatest joy and gift was reaching out to family and friends. loved supporting and encouraging his family. He will be sorely missed by his family, and everyone who knew him - he was truly a mensch.

A Service of Remembrance will be held in his honor on April 6, 2022 at Covenant Living, Golden Valley. Memorials preferred to Helping Paws Service Dogs @ helpingpaws.org

Published on January 9, 2022, Star Tribune

Friendship Force:

Emery and Rubye were the group leaders on our exchange to Bulgaria and they did a wonderful job the entire trip. We are no longer active since moving but have lovely memories of that trip where we made friends and had our Bulgarian hosts for a visit. Ardy and John Becklin

REMEMBERING



Joyce Margaret Sharp

March 30, 1936 – January 13, 2022

St. Louis Park MN

Joyce was born on March 30, 1936 to Ray and Elsie Sharp in rural Ormsby, MN. Joyce worked as a legal secretary for Erickson Law Firm, executive secretary for IDS and as a Mary Kay cosmetics consultant. Outside of work, she was a member of Westwood Lutheran Church and a member of Friendship Force. Preceded in death by parents, Ray and Elsie Sharp; sisters, Joan (Walter) Bettin and infant sister, Ruth; nephew, Doug Bettin and nephew-in-law, Duane Anderson. Joyce is survived by her niece, Kari Anderson; nephews, Paul (Lisa) Bettin and Philip (Sheila) Bettin; niece-in-law, Dianne Bettin, and grand nieces/nephews and great-grand nieces/nephews.

Services will be held in Spring of 2022. Washburn-McReavy.com Edina Chapel 952-920-3996.

Published on January 16, 2022, Star Tribune

Friendship Force: Joyce Sharp was a member of the Friendship Force of Minnesota Twin Cities since 1987. She joined twenty-three FFI Journeys, beginning with New Albans, England. She traveled to Europe, Asia, Japan, South and Central America, and Cuba. She also traveled on many domestic exchanges. Joyce led five FFI Journeys including her unique Mississippi River theme Journey through the Midwest. Joyce was a leader on the board in many capacities, including Club Secretary and President. She also co-led a Midwest Regional Conference in 1990 in Bloomington MN.

Joyce traveled to approximately 60 countries with the majority of them being through Friendship Force. She was always interested in getting to know the people and their customs. Joyce stayed in touch with many of them after an exchange and had remained in touch with two of them for the past 40 years. A true Ambassador for Friendship Force! Barb Emer

Travel Bytes

by *Buck MacDonald, Board Director*

After more than a year of banning foreign leisure travelers from entering the US, the government announced that residents from other countries may visit with proof of vaccination, beginning in early November. They will also need to show proof of a negative Covid-19 test.

The European Union (EU) has taken the US off its safe-travel list, causing some countries like Spain, France and Denmark to bar unvaccinated leisure travelers from the US. EU countries' rules vary so travelers should do their research and check the CDC's country-specific recommendations.

The CDC continues to revise its travel recommendations for countries around the world recommending that people should currently not visit high-risk countries such as Great Britain, France and Iceland. For lower risk countries such as Italy, Mexico, Poland, Hungary, etc., the CDC still recommends being fully vaccinated before visiting. For people with an increased risk of severe illness, the CDC advises avoiding cruise ship and river-cruise travel.

Canada has opened its borders to US travelers who show proof of full vaccination and a pre-entry Covid-19 test. Meanwhile, the US continues to restrict travel to the US from its two closest neighbors, Canada and Mexico

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Among the 2022 appointees to the Board are:

Faisa Mohammed, who presented her story of coming to America from Somalia at a Travel-Tuesday in 2021. Faisa is new to the Board this year.

Mary Cunningham, who previously served on the Board as Treasurer and Journey Director. Mary and her late husband, Bill, led many Journeys during their years as Club members.

The other Directors appointed this year by President Tom Scott, and approved by the Board, also served in 2021. The 2022 Committee Appointments are noted to the right.

NEW CLUB MEMBERS IN 2022

Karen and Ed Stuart are new members, but not new to the Club. They hosted Open World Delegates in 2018.

Helen Rugowski is new to our Club, but not new to FFI. She formerly was a member of the Milwaukee WI Club.

BOARD of DIRECTORS

2022 ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Tom Scott
(Membership, Programming)
tscott1909@gmail.com
612-804-4102

Vice President: Max Harris
xharris26@comcast.net
952-938-2101

Secretary: Shirley Cavallaro
louisemarieanderson17@gmail.com 612-354-0927

Treasurer: Rose Emerick
rose3689@comcast.net
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BOARD DIRECTORS

Jane Bardon: Communications Chair, News Editor, Webmaster
ffminnesotavp@yahoo.com

Cindy Cauble: Journey Director, Zoom-master
cindyc219@msn.com

Mary Cunningham: Member-at-Large
marycunningham001@comcast.net

Faisa Mohammed: Member-at-Large Mfaisa@outlook.com

Buck MacDonald: Member-at-Large jbmcd11@hotmail.com

Rita Mays: Member-at-Large
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Non-Board Volunteer

Jan Lanyk: Facebook Admin
janlanyk@gmail.com

CLUB WEBSITE
FFTwinCities.org

CLUB NEWSLETTER

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